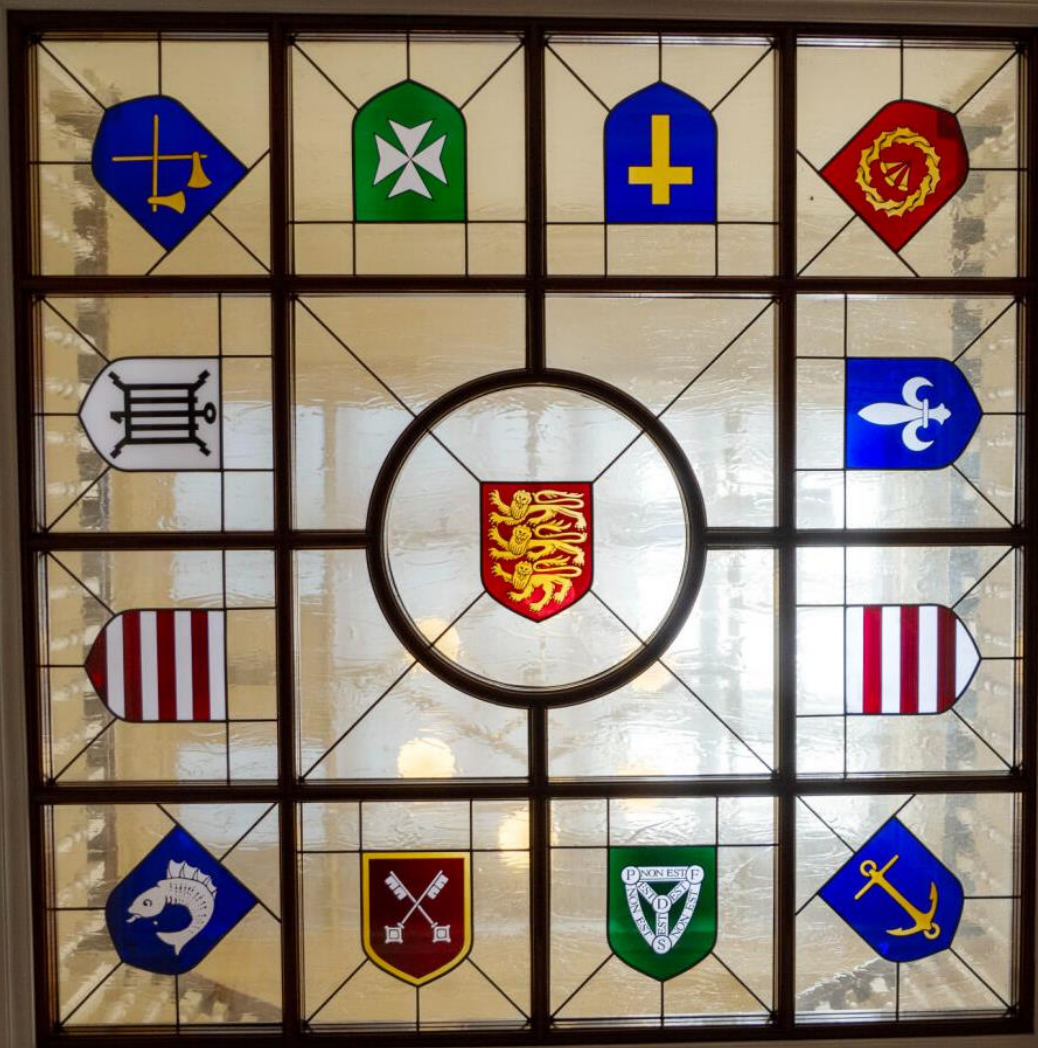


The relationship between the Parishes and Government of Jersey

Parishes and Government Review Panel

23rd February 2026

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States of Jersey
States Assembly



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1. Chair's Foreword

The parish system lies at the heart of Jersey's civic, constitutional and community life. For centuries, parishes have provided local leadership, democratic participation and practical services that matter deeply to Islanders. They are places of identity, continuity and connection, and they continue to play a vital role in supporting communities across the Island. The parish system matters – not only for what it has been, but for what it must continue to be in the years ahead. This review was undertaken in recognition of that enduring importance and with a clear intention: to examine the relationship between the parishes and the Government of Jersey in a constructive, respectful and forward looking way.

The Parishes and Government Review Panel approached this work as an appreciative inquiry. The evidence we received consistently demonstrated the strengths of the parish system – its deep local knowledge, its honorary ethos, and the trust it commands within communities. Parishes deliver a wide range of services that Islanders value highly, from refuse collection and the maintenance of local spaces to honorary policing and community support. These strengths are not relics of the past; they remain highly relevant to the Island's present and future.

At the same time, the Panel was clear that valuing tradition does not mean avoiding scrutiny. Many of the structures, legislative frameworks and governance arrangements within which the parish system operates are historic and, in some cases, fragmented or outdated. Expectations around transparency, accessibility, accountability and consistency have evolved, and it is reasonable for Islanders to expect public institutions – including parishes – to evolve with them. This review therefore considers how the parish system can retain its distinctive character and autonomy while modernising where change is both necessary and beneficial.

Crucially, the Panel does not view modernisation as a threat to parish autonomy or tradition. On the contrary, the evidence demonstrates that tradition and change are not mutually exclusive. The evolution of the Parish Hall Enquiry system shows that historic institutions can adapt successfully to modern expectations while retaining their core identity. The Panel believes the same is true across other aspects of parish governance and service delivery. Updating legislation, strengthening accountability arrangements, and improving accessibility and transparency should be seen as measures that protect and future proof the parish system, not undermine it.

A recurring theme in the evidence was that the relationship between the parishes and government is generally positive but largely informal. It often relies on goodwill, personal relationships and custom rather than clear, structured frameworks. While this flexibility can work well, it also creates inconsistency and limits the ability to coordinate effectively around Island wide priorities. The Panel does not advocate centralisation or the erosion of parish independence. Instead, our recommendations focus on clarity, collaboration and mutual understanding, so that parishes and government can work together more effectively in the interests of Islanders.

The Panel also encountered varying levels of engagement during the review. Many parish officials contributed openly and constructively, providing detailed evidence and insights that strengthened our analysis. In other areas, participation was more limited. We record this not as a criticism of the parish system itself, but as an indication of a wider cultural challenge: long established structures can sometimes be cautious or defensive when subject to external examination. Openness to scrutiny, clarity of roles, and consistent expectations are fundamental to maintaining public confidence in any democratic system.

This report is published towards the end of the current Assembly term and ahead of the 2026 elections. Many of the issues identified are structural and long term in nature. The Panel is realistic that most recommendations cannot, and should not, be implemented quickly. They are intended instead to inform prioritisation and decision making in the next Assembly term, building on existing work such as the Jersey Law Commission's review of Parish Assemblies and ongoing discussions about governance, service delivery and sustainability.

Ultimately, this report should be seen as a platform for continued engagement. Modernisation is not about abandoning tradition, but about ensuring that the parish system continues to serve Islanders effectively, transparently and fairly in a modern context.

The Panel hopes it will support thoughtful, evidence-based debate about how Jersey's parish system can remain trusted, resilient and effective in a modern context, while preserving the traditions and local democracy that make it unique. Tradition and adaptability can be a powerful combination.

I hope this report provides a constructive foundation for that work and encourages thoughtful, evidence-based reform that secures the future of one of Jersey's most important institutions.

I would like to thank all those who contributed their time, expertise and perspectives to this review, and my fellow Panel members for their commitment to this important piece of work.



Deputy Helen Miles
Chair, Parishes and Government Review Panel

2. Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Parishes and Government Review Panel's examination of the relationship between Jersey's parish system and the Government of Jersey. The review was undertaken as an appreciative inquiry of a system that remains central to the Island's constitutional, civic and community life, and which continues to deliver essential services and democratic engagement at a local level.

Throughout the review, the Panel recognised and valued the distinctive strengths of the parish system, including its deep local knowledge, historical continuity and volunteer ethos within the community. Evidence consistently demonstrated that parishes provide tangible benefits to Islanders and remain a vital point of connection between residents and public life. The Panel does not regard these traditional characteristics as obstacles to progress; rather, they are strengths that should be preserved.

At the same time, the review identified that traditionalism does not need to preclude modernisation. While the foundations of the parish system are historic, many of the processes, governance arrangements and legislative frameworks within which it operates have not kept pace with modern expectations of transparency, accessibility, consistency and accountability. The Panel found that there is scope to retain the character and autonomy of the parish system while updating processes and frameworks to reflect contemporary standards.

The Panel found the relationship between parishes and the government to be generally constructive but largely informal, relying on personal relationships and goodwill rather than structured mechanisms. Although this approach can work well in certain circumstances, it can also lead to inconsistencies and limits the opportunity to coordinate delivery of Island-wide priorities.

The review also highlighted challenges in governance and accountability. Legislative frameworks governing Parish Assemblies and certain parish functions are fragmented and outdated. Guidance and good-practice documents exist in several areas, but the Panel considers that their voluntary nature and lack of assurance mechanisms limit their impact.

Engagement and willingness to participate varied throughout the review. Many parish officials contributed constructively, but participation from some key officeholders was limited, including the absence of individual responses from Connétables to requests for evidence. The Panel notes this not as a criticism of the parish system, but as an indication of a broader cultural challenge: long-established structures and practices can sometimes react defensively to scrutiny. The Panel believes that acknowledging these issues openly is essential for encouraging informed discussion, supporting improvement, and strengthening long-term resilience, while continuing to respect and uphold the parish system.

Service delivery remains one of the parish system's core strengths, particularly in areas such as refuse collection, parks and play spaces, and honorary policing. However, the evidence shows disparities in capacity, funding and sustainability. In particular, the Honorary Police system delivers substantial public value and cost savings but faces recruitment, training and funding pressures that raise strategic questions about long-term sustainability and Island-wide resilience.

The review also examined parish rates and financial governance. While the legal framework is long-established, public understanding of the rates system is low. The Panel's survey evidence demonstrated widespread confusion about how rates are set, what they fund and how assessments

are determined. Differences in accounting practices and limited comparability between parish accounts further contribute to challenges around transparency and public confidence.

The Panel's recommendations focus on clarity, consistency, transparency and collaboration, rather than centralisation or the erosion of parish autonomy. Key recommendations include:

- modernising the legislative framework governing Parish Assemblies to improve accessibility, transparency and participation;
- strengthening governance, accountability and consultation arrangements where parishes act collectively, including consideration of the role and status of the Comité des Connétables;
- improving consistency, sustainability and equity in areas of shared service delivery, particularly honorary policing, refuse and recycling, and play provision;
- enhancing transparency, comparability and public understanding of parish rates and financial governance; and
- establishing clearer and more structured engagement between government and parishes on Island-wide strategies, while respecting local decision-making.

This report is published towards the end of the current Assembly term, ahead of the 2026 elections. Many of the issues identified are structural and long-term in nature, and most recommendations are not capable of immediate implementation. Therefore, they are intended to inform prioritisation, further consideration and reform in the next Assembly term.

This report should be regarded as a platform for continued work rather than an endpoint. The Panel encourages the next Assembly, Ministers, and the Comité des Connétables to treat the findings and recommendations as a basis for constructive engagement and thoughtful reform, ensuring that Jersey's parish system remains trusted, resilient and effective, while preserving the traditions and local democracy that make it unique.

3. Key Findings

Parish Context, Capacity and Local Variation

- The demographic and housing profiles of the parishes vary significantly, with marked differences in population size, age structure, housing type and tenure. Urban parishes, particularly St Helier and those bordering it, have younger populations and higher concentrations of flats, rental and social housing, while rural parishes tend to have older populations and higher levels of owner-occupation. These differences have direct implications for parish service demand, communication methods and staffing (Key Finding 1).
- There is variation in the availability of parish-led community support arrangements. Some parishes with relatively older populations do not currently operate formal community support teams, while others with different population profiles do. This suggests an opportunity for parishes to make more consistent use of demographic data, alongside direct engagement with parishioners, to inform decisions about service priorities and community support models (Key Finding 2).
- Formal coordination mechanisms exist between parishes, most notably through monthly parish secretary meetings, but much inter-parish collaboration remains informal and operational rather than strategic (Key Finding 3).
- Some parishes identified opportunities for greater consistency across services and processes; however, structural and governance constraints, including funding approval through individual Parish Assemblies, can limit the extent of inter-parish collaboration (Key Finding 4).
- While all parishes have introduced some digital services and expressed interest in greater consistency and coordination, progress remains constrained by limited resources, funding pressures, and the absence of a shared strategic framework. Although there is emerging interest in innovative approaches, including the use of new technologies and Artificial Intelligence, there is no evidence at this stage of implementation or delivery (Key Finding 5).
- Parish Hall opening hours vary across the island, with differences reflecting local demand and capacity. Although not noted as a widespread concern, limited out-of-hours access may affect working-age parishioners in some parishes (Key Finding 6).

Governance, Autonomy and Democratic Practice

- The parish system operates on the principle of strong local autonomy, with governance and decision-making authority resting primarily with individual parishes and their Parish Assemblies. The Comité des Connétables provides a coordinating forum for matters of shared interest but does not override local decision-making (Key Finding 7).
- While guidance such as the Standards in Parish Service demonstrates a commitment to service quality, its voluntary and non-statutory nature, coupled with limited public visibility and the absence of assurance mechanisms, reduces its impact and consistency across the parish system (Key Finding 8).
- Deputies do not have a formal role in parish governance or administration. While informal engagement between Deputies and parishes may occur, responsibility for parish matters rests with Connétables and parish officials. Evidence suggests this arrangement does not generally

create practical difficulties, but public understanding of the distinction between parish and States roles may not always be clear (Key Finding 9).

- The parish system is deeply rooted in Jersey's history and identity, and this tradition remains a significant strength. However, there are aspects of parish governance and culture which can be resistant to scrutiny, transparency and change. Variability in engagement with the review and defensiveness in responding to evidence requests risk reinforcing perceptions that parts of the system have not kept pace with modern expectations (Key Finding 10).
- The evolution of the Parish Hall Enquiry system provides clear evidence that historic parish institutions are capable of adapting to modern standards while retaining their core identity. This example demonstrates that reform and modernisation does not need to undermine tradition and offers a practical model for how other aspects of parish governance could evolve (Key Finding 11).

Coordination, Accountability and the Role of the Comité des Connétables

- Parish Assemblies remain a unique and important feature of local democracy; however, attendance is often low and participation is constrained by outdated notice requirements, the absence of quorum provisions, and limited accessibility options. These factors may weaken public confidence and restrict opportunities for broader community involvement in parish decision-making (Key Finding 12).
- While the parish system is built on longstanding custom and legislation, much of the statutory framework governing parish administration and Parish Assemblies is fragmented, outdated and increasingly misaligned with contemporary standards of accessibility, transparency and accountability (Key Finding 13).
- The parishes continue to play a vital role in local governance, community support and service delivery, underpinned by strong local knowledge, historical continuity and community trust. Many parish-led services are well regarded by residents and provide meaningful social and civic benefits that are distinct from, and complementary to, government provision (Key Finding 14).
- Parishes consistently emphasised the democratic nature of the Parish Assembly system; however, current procedural arrangements have not kept pace with modern expectations of transparency, accessibility and participation. Without reform, this gap risks undermining public confidence in parish decision-making, regardless of the system's historic legitimacy (Key Finding 15).
- The Dogs (Jersey) Law Amendment Regulations demonstrated that when the Comité des Connétables brings forward legislation, the absence of structured consultation protocols can result in insufficient early engagement with key stakeholders. This weakens policy development, increases reliance on Scrutiny intervention, and risks undermining confidence in parish-initiated legislation (Key Finding 16).
- The Comité des Connétables exercises influence over matters affecting all twelve parishes, including when initiating legislation, yet its non-statutory status creates uncertainty about its authority, accountability and decision-making responsibilities (Key Finding 17).
- Engagement between the government and parishes is generally constructive but relies on goodwill, personal relationships and informal arrangements rather than structured frameworks.

While this flexibility can be effective, it creates vulnerability to inconsistency and limits opportunities for coordinated delivery of island-wide priorities (Key Finding 18).

Delivery of Local Services

- Despite Jersey's small geographic size, refuse and recycling services are delivered through multiple parish, government and Ports of Jersey arrangements. There is evidence of duplication, particularly in public spaces such as beaches and recreational areas, as well as significant variation in costs between parishes. This fragmentation limits economies of scale and impacts accountability (Key Finding 19).
- Some parishes face practical barriers to introducing or expanding kerbside recycling, including difficulties securing contractors, uncertainty about end-processing of recyclable materials, and the requirement for Parish Assembly approval of additional expenditure. These constraints have resulted in uneven service provision that is not solely driven by environmental priorities or demographic need (Key Finding 20).
- Evidence submitted by St Helier demonstrates that parish-led collaboration or shared delivery models for refuse and recycling could offer an alternative to both parish provision and full government centralisation. Such models could improve consistency, reduce duplication and strengthen resilience, while retaining parish accountability. However, no formal proposals have yet been developed, and any such approach would require collective parish engagement and Parish Assembly approval (Key Finding 21).
- There is considerable variation in the scale, quality, accessibility and future development of parish-managed play spaces. Some parishes are investing in new or upgraded facilities, often informed by community consultation, while others report limited budgets and no current plans for expansion. These differences risk creating geographic inequalities in access to high-quality and inclusive play provision (Key Finding 22).
- While the Jersey Play Plan 2025–2028 provides a high-level vision for promoting play, it does not set out a clear Island-wide framework for standards, investment, asset management or long-term maintenance. The absence of detailed guidance and coordinated funding mechanisms limits the Plan's effectiveness in supporting consistent, equitable provision across parishes (Key Finding 23).
- Examples such as the maintenance of Millennium Park by the Parish of St Helier demonstrate that operational collaboration between government and parishes can work effectively where clear contractual or licensing arrangements are in place. This shows that greater collaboration is achievable without transferring ownership or undermining parish autonomy (Key Finding 24).
- Some parishes possess significant horticultural and land-management expertise that could be utilised more systematically by government, either through contracts or optional licence arrangements. Greater use of parish capability could support income generation, provided appropriate procurement and governance arrangements are in place (Key Finding 25).

Policing and Regulatory Functions

- Funding for the Honorary Police is largely reliant on parish rates, resulting in significant disparities between parishes in access to vehicles, equipment and operational resources. Evidence from the Attorney General, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs and the States of

Jersey Police indicates that this model is unlikely to be sustainable in the long term and limits the ability to fund Island-wide initiatives such as recruitment and training (Key Finding 26).

- Training for Honorary Police officers is currently optional beyond basic mandatory requirements, with significant variation in uptake and capability across parishes. While the States of Jersey Police provide some training, responsibility for ensuring competence and legal compliance rests with individual parishes. The absence of an Island-wide training framework with enforceable minimum standards presents risks to operational effectiveness, safety and public confidence (Key Finding 27).
- If the Honorary Police were unable to operate at current levels, responsibility for their functions would fall to the States of Jersey Police. Given existing resource constraints, this would create immediate operational pressures and financial implications for the government. The sustainability of the Honorary Police is therefore not solely a parish matter but a strategic issue for Island-wide policing resilience (Key Finding 28).

Children, Young People and Strategic Policy Alignment

- Parishes contribute to the “Putting Children First” agenda through the provision of parks, playgrounds, green spaces, community events and the use of parish halls for early years and youth activities. These locally delivered facilities and activities form an important part of children’s everyday lives and support wellbeing, play and social inclusion at community level (Key Finding 29).
- Formal Parish Agreements with the Jersey Youth Service are now in place in 11 of the 12 parishes, providing a structured basis for youth work delivery and governance. However, the nature and depth of engagement varies between parishes, and one parish currently operates without a formal agreement, resulting in inconsistency in youth provision and partnership working across the Island (Key Finding 30).
- Evidence from the Jersey Youth Service indicates that Connétables differ in their confidence, skills and willingness to engage directly with children and young people. Where effective engagement occurs, it is often supported by Youth Workers; however, this resource is not consistently used as a mechanism for informing parish decision-making (Key Finding 31).
- There is no consistent framework or guidance to support parishes in engaging children and young people in parish affairs. In the absence of shared tools, standards or expectations, engagement practices depend largely on local initiative, capacity and individual leadership, resulting in uneven opportunities for children’s voices to be heard across the Island (Key Finding 32).
- Parishes’ close knowledge of their communities positions them well to support preventative public safety measures, such as identifying vulnerable individuals during emergencies, supporting safer routes to schools, and contributing to child-friendly and safer public spaces. However, this potential is not currently supported by structured guidance or coordination mechanisms (Key Finding 33).
- There is limited evidence of parishes being formally engaged in the delivery of health prevention objectives. While parish activities may incidentally support healthier behaviours, there is no consistent framework, guidance or expectation for parish involvement in prevention-focused work by the government (Key Finding 34).

- Where residents and businesses are required to navigate differing parish requirements, or both parish and government processes, this can create confusion and unnecessary administrative burden. Areas such as event licensing and roadside permissions illustrate where inconsistent or overlapping processes risk undermining the aim of reducing red tape (Key Finding 35).
- Parishes are well placed to support the delivery of government strategies relating to children, communities, health prevention and environmental sustainability. However, engagement with island-wide strategies varies, and clearer frameworks, guidance and supporting mechanisms would help maximise the contribution parishes can make without undermining their independence (Key Finding 36).
- The current statutory framework places primary responsibility for firearms certification with individual Connétables, relying heavily on personal judgement at parish level. While the States of Jersey Police provides intelligence and administrative support, there are no statutory mechanisms to assure consistency, monitor compliance with guidance, or oversee how decisions are applied across the twelve parishes (Key Finding 37).
- Although the Comité des Connétables has developed a Procedure for firearms certification, there is limited evidence that compliance with this Procedure is mandatory, monitored or supported by standardised training. This reliance on non-statutory guidance, without assurance mechanisms, limits its effectiveness in managing risk (Key Finding 38).
- Risk-reduction practices, such as restrictions on ammunition storage, have historically been applied inconsistently across parishes. Although a new policy introduced in January 2026 represents progress towards tighter controls, evidence from the States of Jersey Police indicates that current arrangements do not fully reflect best practice or achieve optimal risk reduction (key Finding 39).
- Evidence from the States of Jersey Police, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, and public submissions indicates increasing support for reform of the firearms licensing system. In particular, there is recognition that the current parish-based model struggles to deliver the consistency, oversight and risk management expected of a modern firearms regulatory regime (Key Finding 40).
- Evidence referenced in the reform proposals and submissions to the Panel indicates broad agreement that the Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974 is no longer well aligned with modern business models. Multiple licence categories, limited policy guidance, and reliance on legal interpretation contribute to a system that can be difficult for applicants to navigate and resource-intensive to administer (Key Finding 41).
- While Roads Committees operate under a shared statutory framework, evidence indicates variation between parishes in inspection practices, resourcing, reliance on volunteers and administrative capacity. The Minister for Infrastructure acknowledged that the Roads Committee system is not well understood and that greater consistency, training and succession planning would be beneficial (Key Finding 42).
- Agreed changes to road controls, particularly speed-limit changes approved at parish level, can take several years to implement. These delays contribute to public confusion about responsibility, enforcement and accountability, and reflect weaknesses in coordination and end-to-end implementation processes between government and parishes (Key Finding 43).

- The evidence indicates that the parish role in planning is broadly understood and operating as intended, but that clearer guidance and improved understanding of existing processes would strengthen confidence, manage expectations and support consistent advisory engagement across parishes (Key Finding 44).

Parish Rates, Finance and Financial Governance

- Parish rates are set annually to meet locally approved expenditure, resulting in variation between parishes. This variation reflects differences in local priorities and costs rather than differences in legal powers. By contrast, the Island-wide rate is uniform across all parishes and updated annually in line with inflation (Key Finding 45).
- Parishes operate under a shared legislative framework and a common assessment guide, with mechanisms in place to promote consistency, including meetings of Assessment Committee chairs. However, some submissions to the Panel indicate that variation may arise in practice due to differences in professional judgement, particularly in relation to subjective attributes such as property condition (Key Finding 46).
- While formal safeguards exist, including rights of review and appeal, some submissions to the Panel suggest that ratepayers may not always receive clear explanations of how assessments are reached. Limited access to comparative assessment information can make it difficult for ratepayers to understand or challenge decisions (Key Finding 47).
- Results from the Panel's survey shows that while most Islanders are aware of the rates system, detailed understanding is low. There is widespread confusion about terminology, who sets different rates, and what services are funded by parish and Island-wide rates (Key Finding 48).
- The absence of a common accounting framework across parishes results in limited comparability between parish accounts. Public submissions highlighted that each parish's ability to select its own accounting policies creates a "patchwork" of reporting practices, making it difficult for parishioners and the wider public to meaningfully compare financial performance or assess value for money across parishes (Key Finding 49).
- While parish accounts are audited, auditors assess compliance against each parish's own accounting policies rather than against a shared standard. This limits the extent to which audits can provide assurance on the consistency, structure, or presentation of financial information across the parish system as a whole (Key Finding 50).
- Concerns were raised in submissions regarding situations where the Connétable both determines accounting policies and presides over the Assembly that approves the accounts. While no evidence of impropriety was presented, this concentration of roles may give rise to perceived conflicts of interest or weaken public confidence in financial scrutiny arrangements (Key Finding 51).
- Evidence from procureurs indicates genuine concern about the proportionality, cost, and administrative burden of mandatory GAAP-style accounting, particularly given the voluntary nature of parish roles. Whilst these concerns are noted, the absence of any common baseline standard represents a missed opportunity to strengthen public confidence and long-term governance resilience (Key Finding 52).

- There was recognition among procureurs of the value of clearer guidance and enhanced opportunities for knowledge sharing. The lack of structured, Island-wide forums for procureurs represents a gap in the current governance arrangements (Key Finding 53).

4. Recommendations

This report is published towards the end of the current Assembly term, ahead of the elections scheduled for June 2026. The Panel is conscious that many of the issues identified through this review are structural in nature and extend beyond the scope of short-term action.

The Panel recognises that, as a result, most of the recommendations are not capable of immediate implementation. This reflects the complexity of the parish system, the importance of parish autonomy, and the need for careful consideration to ensure that any change is effective.

The Panel's recommendations are therefore grouped thematically to reflect the main areas of evidence and analysis set out in this report and to support clarity and ease of reference.

Parish Governance, Democracy and Accountability

- The Chief Minister, in collaboration with the Comité des Connétables should proceed with the development of new legislation to replace the Loi (1804) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales and the Loi (1905) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales, in line with the Jersey Law Commission's report Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework. Any new legislation should be drafted in English and provide a coherent and accessible statutory basis for the operation of Parish Assemblies (Recommendation 2).
- Any future legislative or regulatory provisions for Parish Assemblies should explicitly address accessibility, including:
 - consideration of alternative meeting times;
 - the recording and publication of minutes within a defined timeframe
 - availability of information in accessible formats, such as large print; and
 - measures to support participation by those with mobility or transport limitations (Recommendation 3).
- The feasibility of introducing alternative voting and participation methods, including proxy, postal, or electronic voting, should be examined for Parish Assemblies. Any such reforms should be accompanied by appropriate safeguards to maintain the integrity and legal certainty of Parish Assembly decisions (Recommendation 4).
- The potential for enabling remote attendance and participation at Parish Assemblies should be assessed, drawing on experience during the Covid-19 pandemic. Legislative clarity would be required to ensure that decisions taken using virtual or hybrid formats have consistent legal effect (Recommendation 5).
- Statutory notice requirements for Parish Assemblies should be reviewed to reflect contemporary communication practices. While retaining formal notice requirements, the framework should require the use of additional channels, such as parish websites, social media and other accessible formats, to ensure that information about Parish Assemblies is clear, timely, and widely disseminated (Recommendation 6).
- The government, together with the Comité des Connétables, should explore the merits of placing the Comité on a statutory footing through dedicated legislation that clearly defines its role, powers and limits (Recommendation 8).

- The government, in collaboration with the Comité des Connétables, should develop a more formal framework to underpin engagement and collaboration between government and parishes. This should set out roles, responsibilities, and mechanisms for joint working on island-wide priorities, reducing reliance on informal arrangements while retaining appropriate flexibility and local autonomy (Recommendation 9).

Inter-Parish Coordination and Collaboration

- Community Support Teams are a highly valued service provided in several parishes. The Comité des Connétables should facilitate discussion between parishes on the future of community support provision, including sharing good practice, demographic evidence and delivery models. This should support parishes to co-ordinate and collaborate on approaches to community support, while preserving local choice and accountability (Recommendation 1).
- Government should establish more structured and consistent engagement arrangements with the parishes, through the Comité des Connétables, when developing and implementing island-wide strategies. This should include early engagement, clarity on expectations, and practical support mechanisms that reflect differing parish demographics and capacities (Recommendation 22).
- When the Comité des Connétables brings forward legislation within an area of ministerial responsibility, early engagement should take place with the relevant Minister and department to ensure that consultation, policy development and impact considerations are robust and transparent (Recommendation 7).
- The Comité des Connétables, working with procureurs du Bien Public, should consider establishing more structured, Island-wide opportunities for procureurs to share knowledge, guidance and good practice. This could include regular forums, shared guidance materials or periodic training sessions, with the aim of strengthening consistency, confidence and collective learning (Recommendation 30).

Community Services and Facilities

- The government and parishes should work collaboratively to identify gaps in access to play provision across the Island and consider how these might be addressed through targeted investment, shared use of school grounds, improved coordination between parishes, and prioritisation of inclusive and accessible play equipment. This work should be guided by evidence and integrated into an Island-wide framework (Recommendation 15).
- The government should ensure procurement processes actively enable parishes to bid for maintenance and horticultural contracts where they have relevant expertise. This would support local income generation and avoid default reliance on external contractors where parish capability exists (Recommendation 14).
- The Comité des Connétables should facilitate exploratory discussions between parishes on alternative delivery models for refuse and recycling services, including shared or lead-parish approaches. Any such arrangements would be subject to approval through Parish Assemblies (Recommendation 13).
- Where refuse and recycling responsibilities intersect between parishes, government and Ports of Jersey, particularly in relation to beaches, recreational areas and public bins, standardised

Service Level Agreements should be developed and adopted. These should clearly allocate responsibility, funding arrangements and performance expectations (Recommendation 10).

Public Safety, Policing and Regulatory Functions

Honorary Police

- The government, working with the Comité des Connétables, the States of Jersey Police (SOJP) and Honorary Police leadership, should develop a clear, modern statement of the role, purpose and core responsibilities of the Honorary Police. This should define what is expected of honorary officers in a 21st-century policing context and provide a consistent basis for recruitment, training, deployment and public understanding (Recommendation 16).
- There should be a standardised, Island-wide training framework for Honorary Police officers, including mandatory core training requirements proportionate to their statutory powers and operational duties. This framework should be developed collaboratively with SOJP and supported by a sustainable funding model to ensure consistent competency, safety and legal compliance across all parishes (Recommendation 17).
- The government, in collaboration with the Comité des Connétables, should review the current parish based funding model for the Honorary Police. The review should consider options for central or hybrid funding arrangements, including the prioritisation of Honorary Police funding requests through the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund (COCF), to ensure the equitable provision of essential equipment, training, and core operational capability across all parishes, while maintaining local accountability (Recommendation 18).
- The government should explore options to improve Honorary Police access to appropriate operational information and policing systems, subject to safeguarding and data-protection requirements. Investment in secure IT solutions and a sustainable funding model for devices and licences would enhance officer safety, situational awareness and effectiveness (Recommendation 19).
- The government and parishes should work together to support recruitment and retention of Honorary Police officers through coordinated Island-wide initiatives. This should include improved public awareness of the role, consistent recruitment messaging, and consideration of policies to support honorary service alongside employment, including within the public sector (Recommendation 20).

Firearms Licensing

- This recommendation is made in two stages. Stage 1 focuses on strengthening public safety, consistency and accountability in firearms certification through immediate governance improvements. Stage 2 provides for longer-term structural reform.

Stage 1 - The Comité des Connétables, working with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, should strengthen the governance arrangements surrounding the issuing of firearm certificates by Connétables. This should include regular review of the existing Procedure, standardised training for Connétables, and the introduction of mechanisms to monitor compliance and consistency of decision-making across parishes.

Stage 2 - The government should undertake a comprehensive review and reform of the firearms certification system, with the aim of strengthening oversight, standardising

decision-making, and reinforcing public confidence through a transparent and consistently applied regulatory framework. The review should ultimately determine whether primary responsibility for firearms and ammunition licensing should be transferred away from individual parishes to a centralised, statutory authority (Recommendation 23).

Children, Young People and Youth Engagement

- The government, working with the Comité des Connétables and the Jersey Youth Service, should develop an Island-wide protocol to support parish engagement with children, young people and families. The protocol should provide practical guidance, shared tools and youth-friendly materials to help parishes meaningfully involve children and young people in decisions that affect them (Recommendation 21).

Environment Sustainability and Waste Management

- The government's review of the Waste Management (Jersey) Law 2005 should determine whether municipal waste collection should be a licensed or regulated activity, with appropriate oversight and assurance arrangements. This would strengthen accountability and ensure consistent standards across all providers (Recommendation 12).
- Government should strengthen Island-wide education and communication on recycling as part of the new waste strategy, working with parishes to ensure consistent messaging. This should explicitly address public misconceptions about recycling and the operation of the Energy Recovery Facility and make use of both digital and non-digital channels (Recommendation 11).

Infrastructure, Transport and Planning

- The Minister for Infrastructure should undertake a review of the end-to-end decision-making and implementation process for speed-limit changes, with a view to reducing delays where parish approval has already been secured. As part of this review, the Minister should identify opportunities to streamline statutory, technical and administrative stages, including clearer timescales, improved coordination between stakeholders, and earlier identification of potential obstacles to implementation (Recommendation 24).
- The Minister for Infrastructure should work with parishes to develop non-mandatory, Island-wide guidance for Roads Committees, aimed at improving consistency of inspection, maintenance and resourcing practices while respecting parish autonomy. Any proposed framework or guidance should be developed collaboratively with parishes, recognising local variation while addressing concerns that the current system is not consistently understood or applied (Recommendation 25).
- The Minister for the Environment, in collaboration with the Minister for Infrastructure, should develop and publish clear, non-statutory guidance to improve clarity, consistency and transparency in how parishes engage with planning applications. This guidance should:
 - clarify the formal status and weight of parish comments and objections, including where parishes are acting as statutory consultees;
 - support more consistent approaches by Roads Committees through the sharing of best practice; and

- encourage earlier and proportionate engagement between Planning and parishes on major or complex developments,

without altering existing decision-making responsibilities (Recommendation 26).

Finance, Rates and Financial Transparency

- Parishes should provide clearer, more consistent explanations to ratepayers on how rateable values are determined. This could include plain-English guidance on the use of attributes, clearer reasons for assessment decisions, and improved signposting to review and appeal processes (Recommendation 27).
- The government should lead a comprehensive review of the legislative framework governing parish rates, working with the Comité des Connétables, to ensure it meets contemporary standards of transparency, comparability, and public accountability. Where deficiencies are identified, the government should commit to bringing forward legislative changes to modernise the framework (Recommendation 28).
- The Comité des Connétables, working with Procureurs du Bien Public and relevant professional advisers, should develop a common baseline framework for parish accounts. This may not mandate full GAAP compliance, but should set out a minimum, proportionate set of common principles and presentation standards to improve comparability, transparency and public understanding across parishes (Recommendation 29).

5. Introduction

Context

The parishes have been at the heart of Jersey's civic life for centuries, providing essential services and acting as a key point of contact for islanders. Their responsibilities include both community-focused functions and statutory duties, which interact with the work of government departments in several areas.

Their relationship with the government has evolved over time, shaped by changes in legislation, community expectations, and the need for efficient service delivery. This relationship has been the subject of previous reviews and remains a topic of ongoing discussion.

As Jersey faces modern challenges, such as environmental commitments, digital transformation, and demographic change, the way parishes and government collaborate will continue to be an important consideration for policymakers.

Purpose of the review

Building on this context, the Panel has examined the relationship between the functions and services provided by the parishes and those delivered by the government. The review considered how both tiers of administration collaborate to provide community services and assessed the effectiveness of these partnerships.

It has also explored how government engages with the parishes to implement key strategies and policies, including Putting Children First, the Carbon Neutral Roadmap, reducing bureaucracy, and community safety initiatives. Ultimately, the review aimed to evaluate how these interactions support the delivery of services to the public and whether improvements are needed to meet modern expectations.

Methodology

The Panel announced its review in March 2025 and agreed to gather evidence before inviting witnesses to attend public hearings. The initial evidence-gathering period spanned from March to October 2025 and involved multiple stages to ensure a comprehensive and balanced approach.

Engagement with parishes

The first stage focused on obtaining information from all twelve parishes. The Panel wrote to each parish requesting data to inform the review and was mindful of avoiding undue burden on parish administrations. To achieve this, requests were divided into stages and presented in a survey-style format, with the aim of making it easier for parishes to respond within specified timeframes. The topics covered in these stages were:

1. Parish administration, resources, and services provided
2. Parks, gardens, play spaces, refuse and recycling
3. Alcohol licensing, administration and policing of roads, parks and beaches, and the planning application process
4. Parish rates

In November 2025, the Panel also wrote to all Connétables inviting them to submit their views on any matters relating to the review. This invitation was extended to Connétables both individually and collectively.

Community engagement

To gather public views, the Panel held a series of pop-up stands in various locations and attended meetings with community groups, including Age Concern, the Good Companions Club, and Arthritis Jersey. These sessions provided valuable insights into how islanders perceive the parish system and its relationship with government.

The Panel also undertook a public survey in September 2025 on the parish rates system, which received over 480 responses, providing a broad perspective on this important issue.

Public hearings and workshops

Following the initial evidence-gathering phase, the Panel held several public hearings with key stakeholders. In addition, evening workshops were organised with the Procureurs de Bien (September 2025) and the Comité des Chefs de Police (October 2025). The final stage involved asking each Connétable a series of questions in a survey-style format, similar to that used with the parishes, to capture their individual views and opinions on a range of matters. The Panel also conducted a public hearing with the Chair of the Comité des Connétables in February 2026, focusing on the Panel's initial findings and testing potential recommendations.

Examination of previous work and reviews

The Panel examined previous reviews and reports relating to the relationship between parishes and government to ensure that its work built on existing knowledge and identified areas where progress has been made or further action is required. A full list of research sources is provided in the Appendix.

Engagement challenges and observations

While the Panel is grateful for the time and effort provided by many parish officials, the level of engagement varied significantly across parishes. In some cases, responses were detailed, timely, and supported by additional evidence, which greatly assisted the Panel's work. However, other parishes were less forthcoming and provided limited information to some requests. This inconsistency created challenges in developing a fully balanced analysis and highlighted the absence of a common approach to transparency and collaboration.

The Panel also observed differences in how Connétables received and responded to the review, particularly when it was first announced. While several were open and constructive, others expressed defensiveness about the process or questioned its purpose. All interactions were conducted professionally, but the variation in tone and willingness to engage highlights the need for clearer expectations and stronger mechanisms for cooperation between scrutiny bodies and parish administrations.

As part of its initial evidence-gathering, the Panel wrote to all Connétables in November 2025 inviting them to submit their views on any matters relating to the review. This invitation was extended both to the Comité des Connétables collectively and to Connétables individually. The Panel did not receive any written submissions in response to this invitation.

In relation to the questions submitted to the Connétables towards the end of the review, the Panel requested that each Connétable provide an individual response, rather than a unified submission on behalf of the Comité des Connétables. The Panel considered this approach important in order to capture the full range of individual perspectives, particularly in relation to matters where Connétables, as Heads of the Parish, hold distinct responsibilities and influence.

No individual responses were received, nor was any communication provided to indicate that individual responses would not be forthcoming. A collective response was subsequently submitted by the Secretary to the Comité des Connétables two weeks after the stated deadline. Given the evidence already received from parish officials on operational parish matters, the Panel regarded individual responses from Connétables as a key element of its evidence base. The absence of such responses reduced the level of individual insight available to the Panel.

This lack of engagement reflects a wider challenge identified during the review, namely that collaboration and participation can be inconsistent and heavily dependent on individual office-holders rather than supported by clear expectations or structured engagement mechanisms.

However, these observations do not diminish the valuable role parishes play in island life. Rather, they point to an opportunity for improvement: ensuring that future reviews benefit from consistent, proactive engagement across all parishes, which in turn supports better outcomes for the community.

Structure of the report

This report is structured in chapters aligned to each term of reference. It begins with an overview of the parish system and its historical and constitutional context, before examining civic functions and administrative roles, joint service delivery, and parish engagement with government strategies. The report also considers governance and accountability arrangements, including the role and status of the Comité des Connétables, and explores regulatory responsibilities exercised by the parishes.

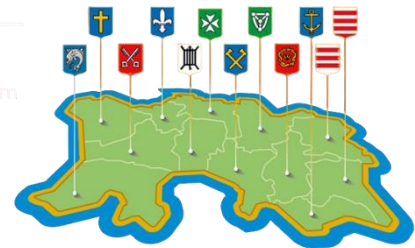
A dedicated chapter examines parish rates and financial sustainability. Each chapter draws on evidence received, analysis, and illustrative examples, and identifies opportunities for improvement where appropriate. The report concludes by summarising the Panel's key findings and highlighting the main messages to inform future consideration and action.

6. Structure and Operation of the Parish System

This chapter sets out the historical, legislative and operational background of Jersey's parish system. It provides context for understanding how parishes function, how they are resourced, and how they differ in size, capacity and demographic profile. The evidence in this chapter underpins later analysis by highlighting structural factors that influence accountability, consistency and service delivery across the Island.

Historical importance of the parishes

Jersey is divided into twelve parishes, which have served as the island's primary units of social organisation and local administration for centuries. Their origins are ancient, dating back to the eleventh century (possibly earlier), and they developed from ecclesiastical districts under Norman customary law into bodies exercising both religious and community functions. Parish boundaries have changed little, making the parish a central pillar of Jersey's civic culture and local democracy¹.



Each parish shares a broadly consistent internal structure. Parishes are subdivided into vingtaines (or cueillettes in St Ouen), within which a range of honorary officers are elected by parishioners. This subdivision historically facilitated local representation, communal work (roads, hedges/branchage), and the delivery of policing and civic duties at local level².

The Connétable is the principal officer of the parish and also serves as a Member of the States Assembly by virtue of their office. The office is rooted in custom, recorded as early as the fifteenth century, and today the Connétable is directly elected at island general elections on a four-year cycle. The role of Connetable is a dual role being Head of the Parish and member of the legislature, which aims to embed parish perspectives directly into island-wide decision-making³.

There are two Procureurs du Bien Public in each parish, elected at Parish Assemblies to act as public trustees for parish property and finances. A Roads Committee and Roads Inspectors also oversee by-roads and related public works under long-standing statutes⁴. These arrangements reflect the parish's responsibility for financial transparency and local infrastructure.

Jersey's honorary police system is parish-based and volunteer-led, with operational leadership provided by the Chef de Police in each parish, appointed from among the Centeniers. Officers (Centeniers, Vingteniers, and Constable's Officers) are elected and sworn before the Royal Court. Centeniers retain distinctive powers, including charging and presenting accused persons and conducting Parish Hall Inquiries⁵.

The Rector, appointed by the Crown, leads the established Church within each parish and presides over Parish Assemblies when ecclesiastical business is considered⁶. The rector is supported by two surveillants (churchwardens) and two almoners. The Panel's review did not extend to ecclesiastical

¹ [Jersey's Parishes](#)

² [Jersey's Parishes](#)

³ [Parish Officers | Comité des Connétables](#)

⁴ [Parish Officers | Comité des Connétables](#)

⁵ [Parish Officers | Comité des Connétables](#)

⁶ [Loi \(1905\) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales](#)

matters as its focus was on the relationship between the government and the parishes, and on the ways in which they work together to deliver services to the community.

The Parish Assembly remains integral to local governance. It elects parish officers (other than the Connétable, Centeniers and procureurs), sets parish rates, oversees roads and local improvements, and considers licensing applications. All parishes maintain a parish hall as the administrative centre for these functions and community engagement⁷.

Legislative and administrative context

While the parish system has developed from customary practice and local tradition, its administrative functions are supported by a body of legislation. This legislative framework sets out the powers, responsibilities, and procedures of parish officers and assemblies, providing legal structure for parish administration. Collectively, these statutes define the operation of parish governance within the wider constitutional framework of the Island.

The [States of Jersey Law 2005](#) provides that Connétables, by virtue of their office, are Members of the States Assembly, creating a formal link between parish administration and island-wide governance. The [Connétables \(Jersey\) Law 2008](#) specifies the terms of office, election arrangements, and procedures for resignation or disqualification. These provisions establish the legal framework for the role of Connétable within both parish and States structures.

The conduct of Parish Assemblies and the publication of official notices are governed by several statutes, including the [Loi \(1804\) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales](#), [Loi \(1842\) sur les publications dans les Églises](#), and [Loi \(1905\) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales](#). These laws set out who convenes and presides over assemblies (the Connétable for civil matters and the Rector for ecclesiastical matters), notice requirements (including publication in the Jersey Gazette), and procedural rules for meetings. The legislation also provides for the use of both French and English in official notices.

Under the [Loi \(1914\) sur la Voirie](#), each parish acts as the highway authority for its by-roads through its Roads Committee and Roads Inspectors. The law prescribes responsibilities for road maintenance, boundary stones, branchage enforcement, and related licensing.

The [Rates \(Jersey\) Law 2005](#) defines eligibility to participate in Parish Assemblies, sets out provisions for levying rates, and establishes procedural requirements for financial governance. The role of the Procureurs du Bien Public, elected at Parish Assemblies, is also central to the oversight of parish finances and property.

Honorary Police officers are elected at parish level and sworn in the Royal Court. The Attorney General and the Court have supervisory jurisdiction over certain matters, including the administration of oaths and fitness for office.

Connétables meet collectively as the Comité des Connétables to address matters of common interest, such as rates administration and shared policies. The Panel understands that this forum provides a mechanism for coordination while maintaining the autonomy of individual parishes.

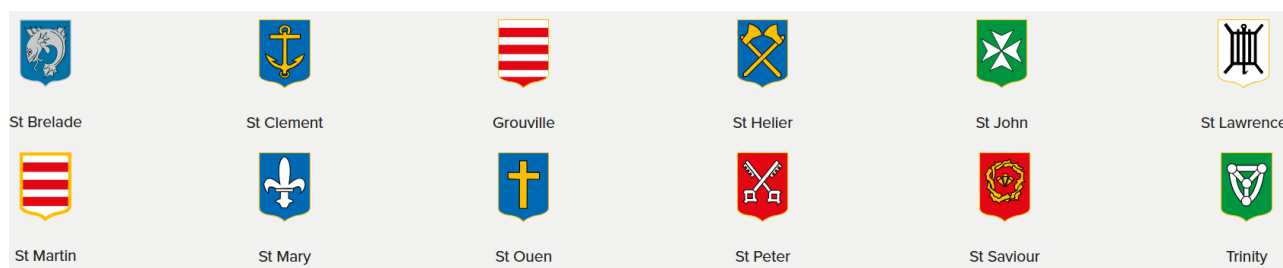
The statutory basis of parish functions helps to explain why certain practices operate as they do, and the Panel was advised on a number of occasions that parish practices and responsibilities arise from specific statutory provisions. The Panel recognises that any significant reform of the parish

⁷ [Jersey's Parishes](#)

system would need to take account of, and potentially be supported by, changes to the existing legislative framework.

Parish profiles

Each parish has a unique population, character and operational context. The following profiles provide an overview of key characteristics for each parish, including population size, age distribution, housing and other demographic indicators. These profiles are intended to provide context for understanding variation in service demand, staffing, operational capacity and community needs across the Island.



Demographics

The [2021 Census data](#) highlights marked demographic variation across the parishes, reflecting differences in population size, housing types and the rural or urban character of each parish:

Parish	Population	Median Age	% Aged 65+	% Under 16
<i>St Helier</i>	35,822	40	14%	14%
<i>St Saviour</i>	13,904	41	17%	18%
<i>St Clement</i>	9,925	44	19%	18%
<i>St Brelade</i>	11,012	48	24%	15%
<i>Grouville</i>	5,401	47	23%	17%
<i>St Lawrence</i>	5,561	46	20%	17%
<i>St Martin</i>	3,948	47	21%	16%
<i>Trinity</i>	3,355	43	18%	18%
<i>St John</i>	3,051	46	20%	16%
<i>St Mary</i>	1,818	45	20%	17%
<i>St Ouen</i>	4,206	46	20%	17%
<i>St Peter</i>	5,264	48	26%	15%

The table above shows that St Helier is the most urbanised parish, with the largest population (35,822) and the highest population density. It also has the youngest demographic profile, with the lowest median age (40 years) and the smallest proportion of residents aged 65 and over (14%)⁸. The proportion of children under 16 is 14%, lower than in all other parishes. St Helier's younger age

⁸ [St Helier Parish Profile](#)

profile is consistent with its urban housing mix, which includes a high proportion of flats, more rental and social housing, and comparatively lower levels of owner-occupation⁹.

Parishes bordering St Helier, such as St Saviour and St Clement, have slightly older populations, with median ages of 41 and 44 respectively. St Saviour has 17% of residents aged 65 and over and 18% under 16, while St Clement has 19% aged 65 and over and 18% under 16, reflecting a modestly older demographic and a relatively balanced proportion of children¹⁰.

The oldest populations are found in St Brelade, St Peter, Grouville, St Martin, St Lawrence, and St John. St Peter has the highest proportion of residents aged 65 and over (26%) and a median age of 48 years, closely followed by St Brelade (24%, median age 48) and Grouville (23%, median age 47). In these parishes, the proportion of children under 16 is generally lower, ranging from 15–17%, indicating an older overall population structure¹¹.

Smaller and more rural parishes, including St Mary, St Ouen, Trinity and St Martin, show broadly similar patterns, with mid-40s median ages and 20–21% of residents aged 65 and over. Levels of owner-occupation in these areas tend to be higher, consistent with larger homes and more balanced populations¹².

Housing

The [2021 Census data](#) shows significant variation in housing types across the parishes. Rural parishes such as St Mary, St John, and St Ouen are dominated by houses, with over 80% of dwellings being houses and only 13–16% flats, with Trinity and St Martin following a similar pattern.

In contrast, the more urban parishes show a different profile. St Helier, for example, has only 29% houses compared to 71% flats. Semi-rural parishes such as Grouville and St Lawrence have a more balanced mix, with houses accounting for 72–76% and flats making up 23–27%. St Clement, St Peter, and St Saviour lean further toward flats, with around one-third of dwellings in this category:

Parish	Houses	Flats
<i>St Mary</i>	86%	13%
<i>St John</i>	84%	15%
<i>St Ouen</i>	83%	16%
<i>Trinity</i>	82%	16%
<i>St Martin</i>	80%	19%
<i>Grouville</i>	76%	23%
<i>St Lawrence</i>	72%	27%
<i>St Brelade</i>	72%	28%
<i>St Clement</i>	68%	32%
<i>St Peter</i>	67%	33%

⁹ [St Helier Parish Profile](#)

¹⁰ [Report on the 2021 Jersey Census](#)

¹¹ [Report on the 2021 Jersey Census](#)

¹² [Report on the 2021 Jersey Census](#)

<i>St Saviour</i>	66%	33%
<i>St Helier</i>	29%	71%

Household tenure patterns also vary significantly across the island. Owner-occupation is the predominant tenure in most rural parishes, with St Brelade (70%), St Martin (68%), St Mary (69%), and St Lawrence (68%) showing the highest levels of ownership. These areas also have relatively low proportions of social housing and non-qualified accommodation, typically between 3–7%.

Urban parishes, however, demonstrate greater diversity in tenure. St Helier stands out with only 37% owner-occupied households, while qualified private rental accounts for 32% and non-qualified accommodation for 13%. Social housing is most concentrated in St Helier (18%) and St Saviour (17%), compared to just 1–7% in rural parishes. Qualified private rental is consistently significant across all parishes, ranging from 16% in St Clement to 24% in St John and St Peter. Non-qualified accommodation is most prevalent in Trinity (13%) and St Helier (13%), reflecting demand for lodging and staff housing near employment hubs.

<i>Parish</i>	Owner-occupied	Social rent	Qualified private rent	Non-qualified accommodation
<i>Grouville</i>	66%	7%	22%	5%
<i>St Martin</i>	68%	5%	20%	7%
<i>St Brelade</i>	70%	7%	17%	6%
<i>St Clement</i>	60%	19%	16%	4%
<i>St Helier</i>	37%	18%	32%	13%
<i>St John</i>	66%	1%	24%	9%
<i>St Lawrence</i>	68%	6%	20%	6%
<i>St Mary</i>	69%	3%	20%	8%
<i>St Ouen</i>	66%	4%	22%	8%
<i>St Peter</i>	62%	7%	22%	9%
<i>St Saviour</i>	58%	17%	18%	7%
<i>Trinity</i>	66%	2%	20%	13%

Overall, the data demonstrates a clear demographic contrast across the Island. Younger, more working-age populations are concentrated in St Helier and nearby suburban areas, while older populations are more prevalent in more rural parishes. The differences provide important context for understanding variation in parish service demand, communication needs, and operational pressures discussed elsewhere in this report.



Key Finding 1: The demographic and housing profiles of the parishes vary significantly, with marked differences in population size, age structure, housing type and tenure. Urban parishes, particularly St Helier and those bordering it, have younger populations and higher concentrations of flats, rental and social housing, while rural parishes tend to have older populations and higher levels of owner-occupation. These differences have direct implications for parish service demand, communication methods and staffing.

Similarities and differences in how parishes operate

While parishes share a common statutory framework and a broadly similar range of responsibilities, the evidence gathered by the Panel demonstrates that there are notable variations in how they operate in practice. Some of these differences are shaped by factors such as population size, geography, demographics, financial resources and staffing capacity. In particular, distinctions between larger, more urban parishes and smaller, more rural parishes are evident across areas including resourcing, service delivery, communication methods and opening hours.

The [Comité des Connétables emphasised](#) that variation between parishes is an intentional and longstanding feature of the parish system, rooted in local democracy and Parish Assembly decision-making. It argued that differences in service delivery, expenditure and governance reflect differing community priorities, geographic characteristics and resource bases.

The following sections examine these variations in more detail, highlighting how local context and parish choice shape the delivery of parish responsibilities in practice.

Parish Resources

Each parish raises income through a parish rate, which is set locally and agreed at a Parish Assembly. These rates fund the operational costs of each parish. While this provides local autonomy, parishes reported that differing financial capacities can limit their ability to develop new or expanded services. Several parishes highlighted a lack of resources and planning capacity, noting that the cost of new initiatives and the potential impact on parish rates can act as a constraint on innovation. St Saviour observed: *“At present, we are uncertain how a collaborative approach between Parishes could be implemented, given that Parish funding is determined through the Parish Assembly, where only parishioners have the right to vote for or against funding proposals.”*

There is significant variation in the size of parish workforces. Larger parishes, particularly St Helier, employ substantially more staff to meet higher demand, while smaller and more rural parishes operate with very limited paid staffing. All parish workforces include honorary roles and volunteers.

Parish	Number of PAID employees
St Helier	235
St Saviour	28
St Clement	12
St Brelade	9
St Ouen	8
St Martin	8
Grouville	8

St Peter	7
Trinity	6
St Mary	5
St John	3
St Lawrence	Number not given

Community Support Teams

In addition to core services, some parishes operate community support teams, while others do not. St Clement explained: *“Our Community Support team has handled hundreds of referrals... We provide transport for medical appointments, shopping trips, and organise coffee mornings and events.”* St Ouen similarly highlighted its volunteer network: *“The Parish has a dedicated and hardworking group of 34 volunteers that carry out community services such as shopping, collecting prescriptions, GP’s, hospital visits.”*

This reflects differences in local priorities, capacity and demographic needs. For parishes with an older population profile, such services may be particularly relevant. For example, St Brelade has a relatively ageing demographic (24% aged 65+), and the potential value of a community support team in this context was noted by the Panel.

The [Beautiful St Brelade Community Engagement Report](#) provides a clear illustration of this potential. Throughout that project, discussions with Parish staff, the Connétable and Deputies identified that St Brelade had previously operated a “flourishing” Parish Community Support Team which has since diminished. There was a shared desire among both parish officials and parishioners to see this initiative revived.

The project demonstrated significant community appetite for such support, with over 100 individuals expressing a willingness to volunteer, alongside additional approaches to the Parish Hall from residents seeking to become involved.

This perspective was reinforced by the [Chair of the Comité des Connétables](#), who recognised the growing importance of community support, particularly in the context of an ageing population, and agreed that parishes could do more in this area. He stated: *“I think we could do better... it is a service that the parishes should provide as best they can.”*

In relation to St Brelade specifically, he confirmed that while a formal community support team was not currently in place, he was keen to develop one and acknowledged the need for appropriate administrative support to make such arrangements sustainable. He also confirmed that this was an issue he would be willing to raise at Comité level: *“I would certainly be happy to take that forward... I think it would be well received.”*

The Panel considers that community support arrangements play an increasingly important role in responding to demographic change, particularly in parishes with ageing populations. Such arrangements can support independence, address social isolation and help residents remain living safely in their own homes, aligning with the government’s wider emphasis on prevention and reducing demand for formal health and care services. The Panel welcomes the Chair’s assurance that this matter would be considered collectively through the Comité des Connétables.



Key Finding 2: There is variation in the availability of parish-led community support arrangements. Some parishes with relatively older populations do not currently operate formal community support teams, while others with different population profiles do. This suggests an opportunity for parishes to make more consistent use of demographic data, alongside direct engagement with parishioners, to inform decisions about service priorities and community support models.



Recommendation 1: Community Support Teams are a highly valued service provided in several parishes. The Comité des Connétables should facilitate discussion between parishes on the future of community support provision, including sharing good practice, demographic evidence and delivery models. This should support parishes to co-ordinate and collaborate on approaches to community support, while preserving local choice and accountability.

Communication and engagement

Parishes use a range of communication methods, including parish magazines, websites, social media and notice boards. However, feedback gathered during the Panel's public outreach suggests that awareness of parish roles and services varies among islanders.

This issue was raised by members of Age Concern, where communication was identified as a recurring theme. While parish magazines delivered by post were welcomed, there was a perception that parishes could increase their visibility through other non-digital channels. It was noted that many older residents do not use online platforms and instead rely on more traditional methods of communication.

Some parishes explicitly acknowledged the need to balance digital and non-digital approaches. For example, St Clement said: *"Our IT service providers are continuously evolving though partnerships with IT vendors and other parishes, but we are very aware that there is still an older population who are not as familiar with online or digital services which requires that we maintain a paper / poster notification as well as keeping in contact by phone."* St John also said: *"We pride ourselves on offering a friendly, welcoming Parish Hall where our Parishioners are more than happy to 'pop in' for help, advice or just a little chat."*

Collaboration and coordination between parishes

All parishes reported participating in monthly parish secretary meetings, which appear to be the main formal mechanisms for coordination and information sharing. St Martin confirmed that there were opportunities for increased consistency across the parish system and St Saviour said that there was ongoing communication with other parishes in terms of sharing resources and working on joint initiatives:



St Martin: *"The Parish Secretaries meet once a month and there are generic software systems across the Parishes. There are opportunities for increased consistency across the Parish system including branchage, parking fines, rates (direct debits) and training."*

St Saviour: *"Beyond formal meetings, the Parish of St Saviour engages in ongoing communication with other parishes to address operational issues, share resources, and develop joint initiatives."*

In addition to formal coordination, some parishes described informal collaboration and resource sharing. For example, St Helier said *“We lend other Parishes equipment and manpower i.e. Storm Ciaran.”* Similarly, St Clement noted: *“We all help each other out. Printing of driving licences for St Martin.”*

Despite these examples, parishes also highlighted constraints on the enablement of inter-parish collaboration, particularly in relation to funding. Decisions on expenditure are made through individual Parish Assemblies, where only parishioners may vote. St Martin noted that: *“Evolving the structure and remit of the Parish Assembly would likely be necessary to enable such interparish cooperation.”*



Key Finding 3: Formal coordination mechanisms exist between parishes, most notably through monthly parish secretary meetings, but much inter-parish collaboration remains informal and operational rather than strategic.

Key Finding 4: Some parishes identified opportunities for greater consistency across services and processes; however, structural and governance constraints, including funding approval through individual Parish Assemblies, can limit the extent of inter-parish collaboration.

Digital services

All parishes have introduced some online services such as dog licence renewals, rates payments, and driving licence applications. The Panel believes these are good examples of common services across the parish system and demonstrates a shared commitment to improving accessibility.

Several parishes expressed interest in achieving greater consistency and coordination in digital service provision. However, they also identified barriers, including limited resources, funding constraints, and the absence of an overarching strategic framework. St Martin said: *“This is a challenge as ideally you need all 12 Parishes to have the same direction of travel... there is little opportunity/time to consider long term strategies/development plans.”* St Saviour added: *“Adapting to the 21st century requires collaboration beyond our parish boundaries... By embracing digital transformation and fostering inclusive community engagement, the Parish of St Saviour strives to meet the changing needs of our residents effectively and equitably.”*

The Panel notes that an article was published in [Autumn edition of La Baguette](#), the St Brelade parish magazine, which explored how emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence could be used to streamline administrative processes, support data-driven decision-making and free staff and volunteers to focus on direct community support.

When the Panel asked the Chair of the Comité des Connétables about adapting to changing needs, he emphasised that Connétables are not opposed to change, provided that the implications are properly understood. He stated that the Comité remains open to suggestions for improvement, including greater use of digital tools: *“We are always open to suggestions and maybe that could be led by technology as time goes on.”* At the same time, he stressed the importance of maintaining non-digital routes for parishioners who are digitally excluded, noting the continuing role of parish halls as accessible, in-person points of contact.

While these ideas remain exploratory, they illustrate how parishes could consider digital innovation as a potential response to increasing demand, limited resources and the need to maintain service quality.



Key Finding 5: While all parishes have introduced some digital services and expressed interest in greater consistency and coordination, progress remains constrained by limited resources, funding pressures, and the absence of a shared strategic framework. Although there is emerging interest in innovative approaches, including the use of new technologies and Artificial Intelligence, there is no evidence at this stage of implementation or delivery.

Opening times

The Panel notes that parishes tend to set their own individual opening hours and operate on varying schedules, with notable differences between urban and rural parishes. While some offer extended hours to accommodate higher demand, others maintain shorter opening times:

Parish Hall	Opening Hours (Weekdays)	Notes
St Helier	Mon–Fri: 08:45–16:45	Standard consistent hours
St Saviour	Mon–Fri: 08:45–15:45	Closed at 15:45
St John	Mon, Tue, Fri: 09:00–16:00 Wed: 09:00–19:00 Thu: 09:00–13:00	Extended Wednesday evening
Trinity	Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri: 09:00–13:00 Thu: 09:00–13:00 & 18:30–20:30	Thursday evening slot available
St Clement	Mon–Fri: 08:00 – 16:00	Consistent hours
Grouville	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 08:00–16:00 Wed: 13:00–16:00	Late start Wednesday
St Martin	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 08:30–14:00 Wed: 08:30–14:00 & 17:30–19:30	Wednesday evening hours
St Lawrence	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 09:00–15:00	Closed Wednesday and weekends
St Brelade	Mon–Fri: 08:00–17:00	Long weekday hours
St Mary	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 09:00–13:00 Wed: 09:00–13:00 & 17:00–19:00	Evening slot Wednesday
St Ouen	Mon, Tue, Fri: 09:30–12:30 & 14:00–16:00 Wed, Thu: 09:30–12:30	Split-day schedule
St Peter	Mon–Fri: 09:00–16:00	Typical office hours

Evidence received by the Panel did not generally identify parish hall opening hours as a widespread concern. Most responses focused instead on broader issues of engagement, communication, accessibility of Parish Assemblies, and visibility of parish services.

However, one [submission raised specific concerns](#) about parish hall opening hours in relation to the needs of working age parishioners. The submission argued that the absence of out-of-hours access

in several parishes creates barriers for those who are unable to attend parish halls during standard working hours. It highlighted variations in practice between parishes, noting examples where evening openings or flexible arrangements were used to support greater accessibility and community engagement.

The Panel notes that this issue was raised by a limited number of respondents and did not reflect a consistent theme across the wider evidence base. Nevertheless, it illustrates differing approaches to parish accessibility and the potential impact of opening arrangements on engagement with parish services.



Key finding 6: Parish Hall opening hours vary across the island, with differences reflecting local demand and capacity. Although not noted as a widespread concern, limited out of hours access may affect working age parishioners in some parishes.

7. Civic Functions, Governance & Accountability

This chapter examines the core civic and governance functions performed by parishes, and how these interact with government responsibilities. It explores decision-making structures, democratic processes and oversight arrangements, identifying areas where the current framework creates strengths, tensions or accountability gaps. The chapter draws on evidence from parish officials, previous reviews and public engagement.

Overview of civic duties

The parishes are at the heart of local governance, with responsibilities that span financial management, infrastructure maintenance, public services, law enforcement, and community representation. At the centre of parish administration is the Parish Assembly which makes key decisions on matters such as setting parish rates, electing municipal officers, approving contracts, naming roads, and handling licensing issues.

Budgetary control and management is a critical duty of the parishes. Each year, the Parish Assembly approves domestic rates to fund essential services and infrastructure. The Procureurs du Bien Public, elected by an electoral assembly, oversee parish finances and property, ensuring compliance with decisions and maintaining accountability. They also have the authority to seek guidance from the Royal Court when necessary¹³.

Infrastructure and public works fall under the remit of the Roads Committee, which is responsible for maintaining and repairing parish roads, enforcing by-laws, managing boundary stones and may supervise refuse collections. Inspectors and Vingteniers assist in these tasks, ensuring that repairs and maintenance comply with Assembly directives¹⁴. Parishes also organise waste management services, including household rubbish and glass collection, kerbside recycling, and the upkeep of public amenities such as parks and play areas.

The assistance in community safety is provided through the honorary police system. Officers enforce the law, maintain public order, and, in the case of Centeniers, have the authority to charge offenders and present cases in court¹⁵¹⁶. Licensing and certification duties also fall within parish responsibilities, with Assemblies reviewing applications under the [Licensing \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#) and managing permits for public spaces and property related by-laws.

Administrative functions include managing electoral registers and organising elections for key parish roles, such as the Connétable, procureurs, honorary police officers, and members of the Roads Committee. Parishes also play an important role in planning and environmental oversight, providing input on development proposals and enforcing property maintenance standards through the annual *Visite du Branchage* inspection¹⁷.

¹³ [Procureurs du Bien Public \(Terms of Office\) \(Jersey\) Law 2013](#)

¹⁴ [Loi \(1914\) sur la Voirie](#)

¹⁵ [Honorary Police \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#)

¹⁶ [Connétables \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Jersey\) Law 2012](#)

¹⁷ [Visite du Branchage and Visite Royale | Parish of St Helier](#)

Governance structure

The governance of the parish system is based on a statutory framework that provides each parish with autonomy over its operations. Under the [Connétables \(Jersey\) Law 2008](#), each Connétable is elected every four years and serves as the head of their parish, presiding over local administration and ensuring the delivery of statutory functions.

The Comité des Connétables is the formal body comprising all twelve Connétables¹⁸. Its primary function is to act as a coordinating forum for matters of shared interest across the parishes. While the Comité does not hold direct legislative authority, it can bring forward propositions and draft legislation for debate in the States Assembly, as demonstrated by recent amendments to the Dogs (Jersey) Law 1961.

The Comité operates under its own [published Rules](#) (2011), which define its procedures, scope, and limitations. These rules set out quorum requirements, voting arrangements, the process for recording minutes and issuing agendas.

Key aspects of the Comité's role include:

- **Regular meetings:** The Comité meets monthly to consider topics such as licensing, rates administration, honorary policing, and digital service development¹⁹.
- **Commenting on policy:** It reviews and comments on proposed legislation that impacts parishes, offering collective feedback to government²⁰.
- **Co-ordinating operational matters:** The Comité facilitates consistency in administrative processes where appropriate, for example in [branchage enforcement](#).

While the Comité provides a platform for collaboration and can initiate legislative proposals, decision-making authority for local matters remains with individual parishes. Expenditure, service delivery, and local priorities are determined through Parish Assemblies, reflecting the principle of local autonomy within its governance structure.

During the review, the Panel was advised by the Secretary to the Comité des Connétables of the existence of the [Standards in Parish Service](#) document, approved in November 2021. The document sets out a series of principles intended to guide parish administration, including commitments to fairness, courtesy, transparency, and responsiveness in dealings with parishioners.

The Panel welcomes the development of this document as an acknowledgment by the parishes of the importance of service standards and public confidence. However, the Standards are non-statutory and operate on a voluntary basis, with no formal mechanisms for monitoring compliance or assuring consistent application across parishes.

The Panel also notes that awareness of the [Standards in Parish Service](#) among the public may be limited as the document is not consistently or prominently published on parish websites. As a result, parishioners may be unaware of the standards they can reasonably expect when engaging with parish administrations.

¹⁸ [Standing Orders of the States of Jersey](#)

¹⁹ [Meeting Minutes | Comité des Connétables](#)

²⁰ [Meeting Minutes | Comité des Connétables](#)

This reflects a wider theme identified throughout the review: while guidance and good-practice documents exist in several areas of parish governance, their impact is often constrained by limited visibility, variable implementation, and the absence of assurance arrangements.



Key Finding 7: The parish system operates on the principle of strong local autonomy, with governance and decision-making authority resting primarily with individual parishes and their Parish Assemblies. The Comité des Connétables provides a coordinating forum for matters of shared interest but does not override local decision-making.



Key Finding 8: While guidance such as the Standards in Parish Service demonstrates a commitment to service quality, its voluntary and non-statutory nature, coupled with limited public visibility and the absence of assurance mechanisms, reduces its impact and consistency across the parish system.

The role of Deputies in parish governance

During the [hearing with the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources](#), the role of Deputies in relation to parish governance was explored. Deputies are elected representatives of their constituencies but are not members of parish municipalities and do not form part of parish administrations.

The [Chief Minister acknowledged that](#), while Deputies are not formally part of parish administration, the extent to which they are involved in parish matters can vary depending on the approach of individual Connétables. He noted that Deputies are often invited to participate informally in parish activities and discussions but emphasised that he would not expect Deputies to play a direct role in parish administration.

Both Ministers indicated that, in their experience, this distinction has not caused significant practical difficulties. While it was recognised that some parishioners may not fully understand the separation between parish administration and States representation, the Ministers considered that parishioners are generally able to raise parish-specific issues directly with their Connétable, or through informal dialogue between Deputies and Connétables where appropriate.

The Panel notes that this issue relates primarily to public understanding of governance however, it reinforces wider evidence that the respective responsibilities of parish officials, Connétables and Deputies may not always be well understood by the public.



Key Finding 9: Deputies do not have a formal role in parish governance or administration. While informal engagement between Deputies and parishes may occur, responsibility for parish matters rests with Connétables and parish officials. Evidence suggests this arrangement does not generally create practical difficulties, but public understanding of the distinction between parish and States roles may not always be clear.

Tradition and adaptability in parish governance

The parish system is built on long-standing customs, historic offices and community-based governance structures that remain central to Jersey's heritage. The Panel believes that tradition is one of the parishes' greatest strengths. However, during the review the Panel observed that this traditionalism can sometimes translate into defensiveness or resistance to scrutiny and change. Levels of engagement varied significantly across parishes, with some providing only limited

information in response to requests, and the Connétables declining to give individual answers to questions directed at them personally. This reduced transparency and made it more difficult for the Panel to understand differences in individual parish practices, capacity and priorities.

Some submissions to the review also expressed concerns that maintaining twelve separate parish administrations creates inefficiencies. One [submission said](#) “We need to modernise. After speaking to politicians and Constables, it is clear to me that the parish system is outdated, inefficient, and undemocratic. It may have been suited to a time when the Island was run by horse and cart, but it no longer serves the needs of modern Jersey.” Another said, “Whilst I am sure historically the system suited the limited population and farming community well, I believe it is now verging on the undemocratic and certainly lacks transparency. In this respect I believe the Parish System is in danger of being brought into disrepute and the last thing Jersey needs is for the System to fail.

These perceptions, combined with the defensive attitudes encountered during the Panel’s evidence gathering, suggest that while the parish system has deep cultural value, aspects of its administrative practice have not kept pace with modern expectations of openness, consistency and accountability.

The Panel believes that the [Parish Hall Enquiry system](#) provides an example of how traditional parish institutions can evolve. Rooted in centuries-old customary practice, the system has adapted significantly in recent decades to incorporate clearer procedural guidance, safeguarding considerations, restorative approaches and a more structured form of community-based justice. Its evolution demonstrates that historic parish mechanisms are capable of modernising in ways that still preserve their identity. This example illustrates that tradition and adaptability are not mutually exclusive, and that similar modernisation could be achieved across other areas of parish governance without diminishing the unique strengths of the parish system.



Key Finding 10: The parish system is deeply rooted in Jersey’s history and identity, and this tradition remains a significant strength. However, there are aspects of parish governance and culture which can be resistant to scrutiny, transparency and change. Variability in engagement with the review and defensiveness in responding to evidence requests risk reinforcing perceptions that parts of the system have not kept pace with modern expectations.



Key Finding 11: The evolution of the Parish Hall Enquiry system provides clear evidence that historic parish institutions are capable of adapting to modern standards while retaining their core identity. This example demonstrates that reform and modernisation does not need to undermine tradition and offers a practical model for how other aspects of parish governance could evolve.

Role of Parish Assemblies

The Parish Assembly (l’assemblée paroissiale) is the decision-making body of each parish and represents one of the oldest forms of local democratic participation in Jersey. The Assembly consists of the electorate of the parish, together with ratepayers²¹ who are not already registered on the electoral roll²².

Although Parish Assemblies are often described as forums for local democracy, their legal remit is limited. In a [review undertaken by the Law Commission](#), it says that, in strict legal terms, the Assembly is not a general debating body, and neither the Connétable nor the Rector is obliged to convene an Assembly to consider matters falling outside its statutory functions. In practice, however,

²¹ In the case of non-resident ratepayers only first named of joint ratepayers

²² [Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework](#), Jersey Law Commission, pg. 8

Assemblies are sometimes convened to consider matters of broader public interest, reflecting their continuing role as focal points of parish life notwithstanding the constraints of the formal legal framework²³.

There is no statutory quorum requirement for Parish Assemblies. While some parishes observe local customs in this regard, these practices are not prescribed in legislation and vary between parishes, resulting in inconsistency in how decisions are made and perceived.

Legislative framework

The conduct of Parish Assemblies is governed by historic legislation, much of it dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries:

 [Loi \(1804\) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales](#) (“the 1804 Law”) which sets out basic procedures for convening and conducting an assembly.

 [Loi \(1842\) sur les publications dans les Eglises](#) (“the 1842 Law”) which deals with placing of certain public notices in the Parish box (boîte grillée).

 [Loi \(1905\) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales](#) (“the 1905 Law”) which sets out who convenes and presides at an assembly (the Rector or the Connétable), and the notice each must give of the holding of the assembly.

 [Official Publications \(Jersey\) Law 1960](#) (“the 1960 Law”) which sets out the choice of French or English language for notices convening Parish Assemblies.

 [Official Publications \(Publication of Jersey Gazette\) \(Jersey\) Order 2018](#) (“the 2018 Order”) which provides where the Jersey Gazette shall be published.

These Laws should be read in conjunction with Article 23 of the [Rates \(Jersey\) Law 2005](#) (“the Rates Law”) which sets out eligibility for membership of the assembly.

Transparency and procedural limitations

The existing legislation does not require Parish Assemblies to publish minutes. While minutes are taken in practice, there is no statutory requirement specifying whether, when, or how they should be made publicly available. Although parishes choose to publish minutes as a matter of practice, this is not mandated by law, which can limit transparency for parishioners who do not attend in person.

Similarly, there is no provision for proxy, postal, or remote voting. Participation is limited to those able to attend in person, and no enabling legislation currently exists to permit alternative arrangements.

The legislative framework governing notice periods for parish matters is set out across several instruments. The 1905 Law establishes a minimum requirement of two days’ notice for Parish Assemblies. This is supplemented by 1960 Law, which requires that notice be published in the Jersey Gazette. The 2018 Order further provides that the Gazette is published online on the States of Jersey website.

²³ [Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework](#), Jersey Law Commission, pg. 9

In addition, the 1842 Law requires notice to be placed in the Parish box in the parish cemetery, although failure to maintain the notice there does not invalidate the Assembly²⁴. Official notices must specify the business to be discussed, and generally no other business may be decided unless it relates to public safety or the care of the poor²⁵.

While parishes routinely supplement statutory notice requirements through websites, social media, parish magazines, email newsletters, and digital notice boards, these practices are discretionary rather than mandated²⁶.

One submission raised concerns about the adequacy of these arrangements, including the absence of a quorum for Parish Assemblies, the short statutory notice periods, reliance on traditional methods of publication, and the governance of parish committees:

”

There is no quorum for a Parish Assembly which means valid resolutions can be passed by just two attendees;

“

The notice for meetings is inadequate and I have seen these called, in very recent times, with five days’ notice;

”

“

Adequate notice of an Assembly consists of it appearing in the “boite grille” outside the Parish Church, which can’t be right; (I appreciate that most are Gazetted but many Parishioners do not look at the Gazette)

”

The Governance for Parish meetings such as Roads Committee, Rates Assessors, Accounts Committee etc. is totally inadequate or non- existent;

“

These first four points often result, inappropriately, in the same individuals being reappointed to the same roles for decades creating a sense of entitlement rather than service to the community. (Challenges to this situation, which are starting to happen, can result in behaviour at assemblies verging on intimidation).

The submission argued that these factors can result in limited participation and a perception of insufficient transparency and accountability.

Accessibility and participation

The limitations of the current legislative framework were reflected in feedback received by the Panel. Members of the Good Companions Club reported limited awareness of Parish Assemblies and uncertainty about their purpose. Improved communication was consistently identified as a factor that might encourage participation, with a preference expressed for traditional formats such as parish magazines, leaflets, and notices in the Jersey Evening Post. Accessibility issues were also raised, including the need for large-print materials and clearer, more straightforward messaging.

Similar themes emerged in discussions with Age Concern. While many attendees expressed willingness to participate, uncertainty about the format and function of Assemblies acted as a deterrent. Timing was also cited as a barrier, with evening meetings seen as inconvenient for some older residents, particularly those with mobility or transport constraints. Weekend meetings were suggested as a possible alternative.

²⁴ [Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework](#), Jersey Law Commission, pg.13

²⁵ [Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework](#), Jersey Law Commission, pg.13-14

²⁶ [WQ.163/2024](#)

The absence of any statutory provision for online attendance or voting was highlighted by experience during the Covid-19 pandemic, when some Assemblies were held virtually out of necessity rather than under explicit legal authority. While virtual formats can improve accessibility, particularly for those unable to attend in person, the lack of legislative clarity raises questions about the legal effect of decisions taken in this way.



Key Finding 12: Parish Assemblies remain a unique and important feature of local democracy; however, attendance is often low and participation is constrained by outdated notice requirements, the absence of quorum provisions, and limited accessibility options. These factors may weaken public confidence and restrict opportunities for broader community involvement in parish decision-making.

Legislative reform and modernisation

In October 2024, the Jersey Law Commission published [Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework](#), which concluded that the current legislative arrangements governing Parish Assemblies are outdated and no longer fit for purpose. The report recommended repealing the principal French-language laws dating back to 1804 and replacing them with a modern statute written in English.

The proposed new law would establish clear rules on membership, voting rights, and procedures, while granting the States Assembly regulation-making powers to introduce further reforms, including provisions for notice, publicity, quorums, documentation, and potentially virtual participation.

The Legislation Advisory Panel has indicated support for draft legislation being prepared, and the Comité des Connétables has expressed its support for reform, having considered the Law Commission's report in December 2024 ([WQ.164/2025](#)). It is understood that discussions between the Comité and the Legislation Advisory Panel are ongoing in relation to updating the 1804 and 1905 Laws. The Panel believes that these discussions should continue after the 2026 elections.

The Law Commission's recommendations support earlier calls for reform. In 2012, former Deputy Mike Higgins' proposition ([P.119/2012](#)) sought both greater clarity around the roles and powers of parish officials and the consolidation of parish legislation into modern English-language law. Although the proposition was rejected at the time, many of the concerns it raised, particularly around legal certainty, accessibility, and democratic accountability, remain relevant.

A [submission to the Panel](#) emphasised the continuing importance of Parish Assemblies as institutions of direct democracy while noting declining attendance and public confidence:



The Key institution of Parish activity is the Parish Assembly. Jersey really should be proud that, like one or two of the smaller Swiss cantons, the parishes continue to hold public assemblies of citizens. Unfortunately, Parish Assemblies are too often held with few present, so hardly effective direct democracy.



Whilst they are institutions of customary law, the Assemblies are subject to the (French Language) Lois 1804 and 1905 au Sujet des Assemblées Paroissiales. The Law Commission has now recommended that these two laws should be replaced, in particular to narrow the number of those able to attend and vote to those residents in the Parish concerned. Presently it includes the Bailiff, Jurats, Attorney General, Viscount, Rectors, Constables and Centeniers regardless of in which Parish they live.



More significantly there will be provision for overdue administrative changes to be proposed to Assemblies by both the States and the Comité des Connétables covering such matters as notice, publicity, quorums, supporting documentation and timing and regularity of Assemblies. The problem is that with other demands on legal drafting, revision of the Parish Assembly law has not been given priority. In my view it should be given priority, as without it and change pushed into the long grass, there will be a further loss in confidence in the Parishes and Parish Assemblies.

The absence of modern procedural safeguards and accessible practices was identified as a contributing factor, reinforcing the case for legislative reform.

In its [collective response](#), the [Comité des Connétables](#) highlighted to the Panel the customary law status of Parish Assemblies and cautioned against reforms that could unintentionally undermine their historic character and legal foundations. While acknowledging the case for modernisation, including consideration of virtual attendance and alternative voting mechanisms, the Comité indicated that work in this area had been paused pending the Jersey Law Commission's review and the prioritisation of legislative drafting resources.

When the Panel met the [Chair of the Comité des Connétables](#), he reinforced this position and expressed clear support for updating the legislative framework governing Parish Assemblies, in line with the Jersey Law Commission's recommendations. He confirmed that the Comité was supportive of the proposed reforms and accepted the case for repealing and modernising the historic French-language legislation: *"I think in fairness to the majority of the public it would probably be better if they were recast."* He acknowledged that progress on this work had been limited to date but indicated that it remained on the Comité's agenda: *"It is on the to-do list and it will be for the next Comité after June to consider how to do that."*

The Panel acknowledges this perspective and considers that reform of Parish Assemblies should seek to enhance accessibility and participation while preserving the distinctiveness of this longstanding institution.



Key Finding 13: While the parish system is built on longstanding custom and legislation, much of the statutory framework governing parish administration and Parish Assemblies is fragmented, outdated and increasingly misaligned with contemporary standards of accessibility, transparency and accountability.



Recommendation 2: The Chief Minister, in collaboration with the Comité des Connétables should proceed with the development of new legislation to replace the Loi (1804) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales and the Loi (1905) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales, in line with the Jersey Law Commission's report Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework. Any new legislation should be drafted in English and provide a coherent and accessible statutory basis for the operation of Parish Assemblies.



Recommendation 3: Any future legislative or regulatory provisions for Parish Assemblies should explicitly address accessibility, including:

- consideration of alternative meeting times;
- the recording and publication of minutes within a defined timeframe
- availability of information in accessible formats, such as large print; and
- measures to support participation by those with mobility or transport limitations.

Overlapping responsibilities with government departments

While the government holds primary responsibility for the delivery of public services, the parish system plays a complementary and, in some areas, overlapping role. This overlap is particularly evident in functions that rely on local knowledge, rapid response, and close community engagement:

- **Community support:** Although income support and safeguarding sit with government departments, parishes play an important role in supporting vulnerable individuals and families at a local level. Some parishes operate [community support teams](#), which provide practical assistance, signposting, welfare checks, and sometimes short-term support to residents experiencing hardship, isolation, or crisis. These parish-led initiatives often act as an early intervention, identifying need and providing immediate assistance before or alongside formal government support.
- **Community care:** Government-led community and health services are complemented by parish activity aimed at strengthening community engagement. Parishes support community life through the provision of parish halls, local events, social activities, and volunteer-led initiatives that reduce isolation and promote wellbeing²⁷. This local engagement overlaps with government objectives around community care, preventative health, and social inclusion, but is delivered in a more informal, parish community focused way.
- **Community safety:** Community safety is a shared responsibility between government and parishes. While the States of Jersey Police provide professional law enforcement, the Honorary Police, appointed at parish level, play a longstanding role in maintaining public order, supporting community safety, and assisting with events, traffic control, and minor incidents. This parish-based policing model allows for visible, local officers who work alongside professional services, particularly in preventative and community-focused policing²⁸.
- **Local infrastructure:** Responsibility for roads and infrastructure is divided between government and parishes²⁹. While island-wide transport policy and major routes are managed centrally, parishes are responsible for the maintenance and inspection of parish roads, local signage, and aspects of environmental upkeep³⁰.
- **Responding to crisis and emergency support:** In times of emergency, parish and government responsibilities come together most visibly. During events such as Storm Ciaran and Storm Goretti, parishes played a key role in supporting emergency response efforts. This included providing emergency centres at parish hall and acting as a point of contact between residents and government agencies³¹. While strategic coordination and emergency services are led by government, parishes are able to provide vital local capacity, communication, and immediate community support.



Key finding 14: The parishes continue to play a vital role in local governance, community support and service delivery, underpinned by strong local knowledge, historical continuity and community trust. Many parish-led services are well regarded by residents and provide meaningful social and civic benefits that are distinct from, and complementary to, government provision.

²⁷ [News & Events | Parish of St Martin](#)

²⁸ [Honorary police](#)

²⁹ [Jersey roads maps](#)

³⁰ [Reporting a problem | Parish of St Helier](#)

³¹ [Storm Goretti – Advice for Parishioners | Parish of St Martin](#)

Challenges for accountability and transparency

While the parish system plays a vital role in community governance, the Panel's review identified some areas where processes could be strengthened to improve transparency, consistency, and accountability. These examples highlight opportunities for modernisation and better alignment with good governance practices. The following sections illustrate two key areas: democratic participation in Parish Assemblies and consultation processes when the Comité des Connétables brings forward legislation.

Democratic Participation

Parishes have repeatedly stated that decisions are democratic because they are made through the Parish Assembly system. However, the current framework raises significant concerns about accessibility and representativeness. There is no statutory quorum requirement for Parish Assemblies, meaning decisions can be taken even if only a handful of parishioners attend. In practice, this undermines the democratic principle that decisions should reflect the views of a reasonable cross-section of the community.

The [Comité des Connétables emphasised](#) that low attendance at Parish Assemblies should not be taken as evidence of democratic failure. It noted that Assemblies routinely attract significant attendance when matters of substantial local interest are under consideration and provided examples of Assemblies attended by several hundred parishioners.

The Panel notes, however, that there is no mechanism for online participation or remote voting, which could increase engagement and inclusivity. Assemblies are typically held in person at Parish Halls, often at fixed times. This scheduling can exclude groups most affected by certain decisions.

When the Panel met the [Chair of the Comité des Connétables](#), he discussed the potential for digital engagement and remote participation in Parish Assemblies, while highlighting current challenges around cost and security. He suggested that progress in this area would likely follow developments led by the Greffe stating: *"Yes, we would all like for people to be able to vote at parish assemblies remotely... but in terms of security we have not arrived at that yet."*

Accessibility is therefore a major issue. Without measures to modernise participation, such as digital attendance options or flexible scheduling, some parishioners may have limited opportunity to provide meaningful input on important matters. This gap challenges the assertion that Parish Assembly decisions are fully democratic and highlights the need for reform to improve transparency and engagement.



Key finding 15: Parishes consistently emphasised the democratic nature of the Parish Assembly system; however, current procedural arrangements have not kept pace with modern expectations of transparency, accessibility and participation. Without reform, this gap risks undermining public confidence in parish decision-making, regardless of the system's historic legitimacy.



Recommendation 4: The feasibility of introducing alternative voting and participation methods, including proxy, postal, or electronic voting, should be examined for Parish Assemblies. Any such reforms should be accompanied by appropriate safeguards to maintain the integrity and legal certainty of Parish Assembly decisions.



Recommendation 5: The potential for enabling remote attendance and participation at Parish Assemblies should be assessed, drawing on experience during the Covid-19 pandemic. Legislative clarity would be required to ensure that decisions taken using virtual or hybrid formats have consistent legal effect.



Recommendation 6: Statutory notice requirements for Parish Assemblies should be reviewed to reflect contemporary communication practices. While retaining formal notice requirements, the framework should require the use of additional channels, such as parish websites, social media and other accessible formats, to ensure that information about Parish Assemblies is clear, timely, and widely disseminated.

Executive Powers

As outlined earlier, the Comité des Connétables has the ability to bring forward legislation for debate in the States Assembly. A recent example such as the Dogs (Jersey) Law Amendment Regulations 202 – [\(P.63/2025\)](#) illustrates how this power is exercised and highlights important lessons about consultation and policy development.

The Dogs Law Amendment was lodged by the Comité in August 2025. During the debate in November 2025, the principles of the Proposition were adopted; however, the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (EHI) Scrutiny Panel subsequently called in the Proposition for review. The Panel recommended that the Comité provide a clear justification for its chosen policy direction on dangerous dogs and set out the extent and nature of consultation undertaken with relevant enforcement and welfare bodies.

Following the debate, the EHI Panel sought written submissions from the Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (JSPCA), the States of Jersey Police, and the States Veterinary Officer to clarify outstanding issues. These included whether concerns raised in earlier submissions had been addressed, the adequacy of enforcement capacity, and whether alternative, non–breed-specific approaches were considered during policy development.

The EHI Panel’s examination revealed significant shortcomings in the consultation and policy-development process. The absence of early, formal engagement with principal organisations affected by the Proposition resulted in a scrutiny process that was both unsatisfactory and unnecessarily convoluted, [according to the EHI Panel](#). While evidence gathered during a public hearing by the EHI Panel in November 2025 provided clarification on policy intent, breed-specific limitations, and practical handling of dangerous dogs, these explanations came late in the process.

The Panel met the secretary for the Comité and explored this example with her regarding processes followed. The secretary confirmed that a law drafting brief had been prepared in consultation with the States Veterinary Officer and approved by the Comité, but no wider consultation had taken place. This demonstrates a clear gap in stakeholder engagement when the Comité brings forward legislation.

The Chief Minister acknowledged this issue during a public hearing: *“There has certainly been a lack of consultation, communication with, for example, J.S.P.C.A. (Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) and the police in that matter, but that is a matter for the Comité.”* He further noted: *“I think if we are talking about this particular point, I think that highlights an area for improvement... It did highlight, I think, a gap where something went to the States, was picked up and ultimately because there were conversations and I understood the Comité decided to stand their ground and proceed. That led to the Scrutiny intervention.”*

This case illustrates that while the Comité has legislative-making powers, the absence of structured consultation protocols can undermine policy quality and accountability. Government legislation follows a defined process of policy development, stakeholder engagement, and law drafting. When parishes initiate legislation, similar standards should apply to ensure transparency, consistency, and robust decision-making.



Key Finding 16: The Dogs (Jersey) Law Amendment Regulations demonstrated that when the Comité des Connétables brings forward legislation, the absence of structured consultation protocols can result in insufficient early engagement with key stakeholders. This weakens policy development, increases reliance on Scrutiny intervention, and risks undermining confidence in parish-initiated legislation.



Recommendation 7: When the Comité des Connétables brings forward legislation within an area of ministerial responsibility, early engagement should take place with the relevant Minister and department to ensure that consultation, policy development and impact considerations are robust and transparent.

Should the Comité des Connétables become a statutory body?

The Panel received evidence suggesting that the current non-statutory status of the Comité des Connétables contributes to ambiguity about its authority, accountability and decision-making responsibilities. Although the Comité exercises a degree of collective executive influence, most notably when bringing forward legislation, it does so without a clearly defined statutory mandate, and recent examples³² have demonstrated weaknesses in consultation, transparency and consistency when acting in this capacity.

A [submission highlighted](#) that, unlike the Supervisory Committee established under the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005, the Comité has no separate legal personality, no formally defined powers, and no bespoke accountability mechanisms, despite regularly taking positions affecting all twelve parishes. This submission argued that placing the Comité on a statutory footing could help clarify its role, establish boundaries that protect parish autonomy, and introduce modern governance safeguards such as reporting, audit and clearly articulated limits:



“In short, making the Comité des Connétables a statutory body would make it easier for parishes to cooperate effectively without sacrificing their independence, and would bring an ancient institution into line with the standards Islanders now rightly expect of any public body acting in their name”.

The Panel notes the [submission received](#) from the Comité des Connétables, which states that the Comité already has a statutory basis. The Comité explains that it is recognised in Standing Orders of the States of Jersey and in a number of primary statutes, including the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005, and that it is empowered in legislation to undertake specific functions and, in some cases, to make Orders.

The Comité further emphasised that the Supervisory Committee established under the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005, which comprises the twelve Connétables, is a statutory body with clearly defined duties and powers. The Comité therefore does not accept that it lacks a statutory footing.

The Panel acknowledges this clarification. However, the Panel's consideration is not just limited to the existence or not of a statutory basis. It also includes whether the current framework provides

³² Dogs (Jersey) Law Amendment Regulations 202 – and the Comité's Amendment to Alcohol Licensing (Jersey) Law 201-

sufficient clarity, transparency and accountability in circumstances where the Comité acts collectively, particularly when initiating legislation or taking positions that affect all twelve parishes.

When the Panel discussed whether the Comité des Connétables should have a clearer statutory basis, [the Chair acknowledged](#) that the current position is not clearly defined, describing it as “*a bit woolly*.” He questioned whether formal statutory status would make a practical difference and expressed concern that it could risk undermining parish independence by enabling greater direction from the States Assembly.

While he did not identify this issue as a current priority for the Comité, he accepted that it could merit further discussion. This evidence illustrates a degree of caution among Connétables about formalising the Comité’s status, particularly where this could be perceived as weakening parish autonomy.

Given the evidence, the Panel considers that there is merit in exploring whether a statutory framework could improve coordination, strengthen accountability and reduce the reliance on informal processes that have, in some cases, hindered effective policy development as illustrated by the Dogs (Jersey) Law Amendment Regulations.



Key finding 17: The Comité des Connétables exercises influence over matters affecting all twelve parishes, including when initiating legislation, yet its non-statutory status creates uncertainty about its authority, accountability and decision-making responsibilities.



Recommendation 8: The government, together with the Comité des Connétables, should explore the merits of placing the Comité on a statutory footing through dedicated legislation that clearly defines its role, powers and limits.

8. Delivery of Local Services: Government and Parish Roles

This chapter considers how key local services are delivered in practice, focusing on areas where responsibilities are shared or coordinated between parishes and government. Using examples such as refuse and recycling, parks, and honorary policing, it explores the effectiveness, consistency and sustainability of current delivery models, and the extent to which collaboration is structured or reliant on informal arrangements.

How parishes and government collaborate

Parishes play a central role in delivering local services and maintaining community life in Jersey. The Panel wrote to the Chief Minister asking a number of initial questions on how the government liaises and collaborates with the parishes. The [Chief Minister's response](#) highlighted a number of insights:

- **Collaboration and engagement:** Operational collaboration between government and parishes is broad and ongoing, covering areas such as planning, infrastructure, transport, licensing, and honorary policing. Both the Council of Ministers' Strategic Policy and the [Government Engagement Framework](#) formally recognise the importance of parish involvement, particularly where government projects impact parish administration. The Comité des Connétables serves as the primary formal channel for engagement. Its Chair attends Council of Ministers meetings by convention and sits on the Emergencies Council, ensuring parish perspectives are represented at senior levels.
- **Frequency of interaction:** There is no formal schedule for regular meetings; however, Connétables can access Ministers directly or through the Comité. Several Connétables also hold Ministerial or Assistant Ministerial roles, which helps integrate parish views into government decision-making - though this arrangement may vary in future Councils. Officers and Ministers are regularly invited to Comité meetings to explain policies and initiatives.
- **Policy and strategic involvement:** Parishes are consulted on relevant policies, such as housing and planning (e.g. the Island Plan). The Government Engagement Framework requires that any project affecting parish administration be considered by the Comité. Parishes also contribute to strategy development when relevant - for example, the Children's Plan 2024–27 included discussions on their role as statutory corporate parents.
- **Communication and feedback:** Communication is largely case-by-case, with civil servants liaising directly with parish officials as needed. There is no designated liaison officer, and government does not support creating such a role, citing resource constraints and the risk of unnecessary bureaucracy. Parish feedback is considered during consultations and policy development, though no formal feedback mechanism exists.
- **Support and resources:** Government provides targeted support, such as Carbon Literacy Training, eco-driver training, and tools like a carbon emissions monitoring spreadsheet. Funding is project-specific rather than through general grants, as parishes are primarily funded via the rates system.

- **Future outlook:** Government reports no significant challenges in working with parishes and expects collaboration to continue in its current form. Upcoming initiatives include digital support sessions for parishioners and continued use of parish channels for public health and consultation campaigns.

During the Panel's [joint hearing with the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources](#), they both emphasised the independence of parishes and their long-standing role within Jersey's governance framework. The Chief Minister described the parish system as one that "*underpins our community, supports our democracy and many social aspects of Island life*," referring to parishes as "*the grassroots of our Island life*." Both Ministers characterised parishes as independent entities rather than extensions of Government, with the Chief Minister stating: "*The Comité are their own entity... they are not part of the Government*."

When asked about potential barriers to collaboration, the Chief Minister expressed satisfaction with current arrangements, noting: "*I think that generally works very well*," and suggested that where systems function effectively, "*when things work well we should perhaps leave them alone*." This reflects a preference for minimal intervention in parish operations.

This perspective was echoed during the Panel's [hearing with the Chair of the Comité des Connétables](#). He described the current relationship between the parishes and the government as generally positive and effective, and stated that he was not aware of any significant difficulties in liaison or communication telling the Panel "*I do not believe we have any difficulties... I am not aware of any difficulties*."

He attributed this in part to the dual roles held by some Connétables as Ministers or Assistant Ministers, which he felt supported communication and alignment: "*Several of us wear different hats... and that is helpful to a large extent in terms of communications and networking to ensure that we are all singing from the same hymn sheet*."

In terms of formal engagement, he explained that consultation typically takes place through the Comité des Connétables, with Connétables able to feed views back to government departments and, where relevant, directly engage with officers or Ministers.

Overall, the evidence suggests that government places significant value on parish independence and considers existing communication arrangements to be effective. Collaboration is largely informal, relationship-based and dependent on individual office-holders, rather than structured through shared systems or formalised delivery frameworks. This approach seems to reflect a conscious choice to preserve parish autonomy, while relying on goodwill and established relationships to support engagement between government and the parishes.



Key Finding 18: Engagement between the government and parishes is generally constructive but relies on goodwill, personal relationships and informal arrangements rather than structured frameworks. While this flexibility can be effective, it creates vulnerability to inconsistency and limits opportunities for coordinated delivery of island-wide priorities.



Recommendation 9: The government, in collaboration with the Comité des Connétables, should develop a more formal framework to underpin engagement and collaboration between government and parishes. This should set out roles, responsibilities, and mechanisms for joint working on island-wide priorities, reducing reliance on informal arrangements while retaining appropriate flexibility and local autonomy.

Refuse and Recycling

Current model

Waste activities and management are guided by the [Waste Management \(Jersey\) Law 2005](#), and responsibilities are shared between parishes and government. Household refuse collection is managed by parishes under the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005³³, typically on a weekly basis. Some parishes operate in-house services (e.g. St Helier, St Saviour), while others use private contractors. All refuse is delivered to the Energy Recovery Facility at La Collette for processing, funded by government. Kerbside recycling is offered by most parishes, though Grouville and St Clement do not currently provide this service. Mini recycling centres remain available across the Island, despite occasional fly-tipping.

The [Minister for Infrastructure told the Panel](#) that Jersey's recycling rate, around 35%, is "disappointing" compared to Guernsey (72%) and the UK (44%). He emphasised the need for greater consistency in what and when items are collected, while retaining parish involvement: *"My personal view is we should be more consistent in how we collect recycling from homes and try to standardise that."* He also confirmed that government subsidises parishes by covering disposal costs: *"We do not get charged for the waste we receive from Parishes at the Energy from Waste facility... so I would say Government are subsidising Parishes as we sit today."*

It is observed that there is little published on the relationship between the parishes and government in terms of refuse. It was noted in the April 2025 [letter](#) from the Minister of Infrastructure to the Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel, that the *'management of Solid Waste in the island is unlikely to move forward without a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities and therefore the development of a framework between the Government of Jersey and the Parish authorities is seen as essential.'*

What works well and what could be improved

Service models vary widely. Some parishes report strong performance and satisfaction: St Brelade said, *"The parish refuse and recycling collection service is extremely efficient with no complaints from parishioners."* Others highlight challenges in securing contractors and funding: St Clement said *"Having looked into the situation on three occasions over the last three years, it is clear that not only can we not find any contractor on the Island to service a kerbside recycling contract, but we have also delayed any further debate. If the situation were to change and we were to determine that the waste is genuinely recycled at the recycling plant, then we would assess the costs and present them to a parish assembly."*

Costs differ significantly between parishes for example, St Brelade reported £614,876 for refuse and recycling in 2024–25, compared to £115,347 in St Mary:

PARISH	REFUSE, RECYCLING (WHERE OFFERED) AND GLASS COLLECTION COST (£) (APR 2023 - APR 2024)	REFUSE, RECYCLING (WHERE OFFERED) AND GLASS COLLECTION COST (£) (APR 2024 – APR 2025)
GROUVILLE	248,179	262,325
ST BRELADE		614,876
ST CLEMENT	475,346	505,710

³³ Parishes collect household refuse and recycling under Part 3, Article 15 (1) (a) of the [Rates \(Jersey\) Law 2005](#).

ST HELIER*		<u>45,272</u> (recycling) and an unknown portion of <u>1,943,339</u> (municipal services)
ST JOHN		<u>212,347</u>
ST LAWRENCE		<u>271,695</u>
ST MARTIN		<u>229,034</u>
ST MARY		<u>115,347</u>
ST OUEN*		<u>272,881</u>
ST PETER	<u>252,363</u>	<u>261,599</u>
ST SAVIOUR*		<u>674,409</u>
TRINITY		<u>242,378</u>

* No contractors – provided in-house

The Minister acknowledged these challenges: *“The cost has to be approved by a Rates Assembly and therefore you are at the behest of your parishioners who either vote the sum of money or do not.”*

Collection frequency differs, most parishes offer weekly refuse collection and monthly recycling, with a couple of exceptions. St Ouen said: *“Paper and card [are] collected every other week, with metals and plastic bottles collected in the weeks in-between.”* St Saviour said: *“Recycling is collected every two weeks, with recycling bags supplied by the Parish. Glass is collected once a month, and residents are provided with a dedicated glass bin for this service.”*

The evidence provided by parishes indicates that refuse and recycling services are largely delivered efficiently at parish level, although there are examples of duplication across government, Ports of Jersey and parish responsibilities. Overlaps exist most notably in relation to public bins on beaches and recreational areas:

”” **St Brelade:** *“Ports of Jersey empty two public bins placed on the piers at St Aubin. Government empty a number of public bins around the parish. Government contract out the recycling bring banks at St Aubin, Quennevais Parade and Les Creux.”*

”” **St Clement:** *“We collect refuse from all properties and businesses throughout the area. I&E will collect their bins of specific regions, and I believe Ports of Jersey also collects from the beaches.”*

”” **St John:** *“Ports collect from Bonne Nuit. All other domestic areas are covered by our Contractors”*

The Minister confirmed that where duplication is identified, efforts are made to resolve this through discussion and agreement between the relevant parties. The Minister’s preferred approach is the use of standardised service level agreements to clarify responsibilities *“Where we identify duplication we try to talk to those parties involved... the key is to get some form of standardised service level agreement.”*

This evidence highlights both strengths and structural challenges within the current parish-led model. While many parishes report high levels of satisfaction with service delivery, differences exist in cost, collection frequency, and the ability to secure contractors.

There are also examples of duplication between parishes, government and Ports of Jersey, particularly in relation to public spaces, which highlight the importance of clear service boundaries

and effective coordination. The evidence suggests that there may be scope for further collaboration or shared approaches to service delivery, should parishes wish to explore them collectively.



Key Finding 19: Despite Jersey's small geographic size, refuse and recycling services are delivered through multiple parish, government and Ports of Jersey arrangements. There is evidence of duplication, particularly in public spaces such as beaches and recreational areas, as well as significant variation in costs between parishes. This fragmentation limits economies of scale and impacts accountability.



Key Finding 20: Some parishes face practical barriers to introducing or expanding kerbside recycling, including difficulties securing contractors, uncertainty about end-processing of recyclable materials, and the requirement for Parish Assembly approval of additional expenditure. These constraints have resulted in uneven service provision that is not solely driven by environmental priorities or demographic need.

Collaboration examples

St Helier articulated a clear position on service delivery. While it does not support the centralisation of refuse and recycling services under government, it highlights that it already serves approximately one third of the Island's population and has invested significantly in vehicles, plant, machinery and modern working practices, including full health and safety compliance. As a result, St Helier considers itself well placed to deliver an Island-wide refuse, recycling and glass collection service on behalf of all parishes:



"The Parish currently collects refuse and recycling etc for approximately a third of the Islands population (35,000 people and 17,000 householders).



Over recent years it has invested in new vehicles, plant and machinery and improved its efficiency and working practices, including full Health and Safety compliance. As such, it would not support the central delivery of these services by Government.



However, having made these investments and improvements St Helier is ideally positioned geographically and has the knowledge, experience, and scalability to undertake Island wide refuse, recycling and glass collection service on behalf of all Parishes, if this was desired."

The Panel understands that this model is already operating at a parish-to-parish level. St John has executed two 5-year agreements with the Parish of St Helier, one covers gardening services and the other covers refuse collection and by-road cleaning services. This arrangement demonstrates that parish-led service delivery at scale is achievable in practice and can operate effectively beyond parish boundaries. The Panel considers that this approach could provide a model for other parishes, enabling efficiencies, consistency of service, and shared expertise while retaining parish accountability.

St Helier also provided a practical model of collaboration with government through contracted service delivery. For several years, it has cleaned government-owned streets and emptied bins on the government's behalf, illustrating that joint working arrangements can operate effectively without formal structural reorganisation.

Public feedback and perceptions

Feedback from the Panel's survey to the parishes suggests general satisfaction with refuse services but concerns about recycling consistency and duplication remain. In addition to evidence received from parishes, the Panel also received representations from members of the public highlighting concerns about the current arrangements for refuse and recycling collection across the Island. One [submission](#) commented on recycling:



"The Island's recycling performance is unacceptable. The recycling rate was just 27% in 2020, when Guernsey's was 72% and the UK's 44%. Jersey's rate apparently increased to 37% in 2021 but fell back again to 35% in 2022 and 2023. So, there is clearly a problem, which is reflected as a blot in the landscape in the unsightly piles of waste at La Colette, providing an unwelcome to Jersey impression to overseas visitors.



The reasons for the problem may be complex, but individual parish responsibility for recycling when Guernsey's response is Island wide, cannot be ignored. Infrastructure Minister, Constable Andy Jehan, said. "I'd like to see recycling done in a uniform way. We still have some parishes that don't do kerbside recycling, and I'd really like to encourage them to get that across the line."



Grouville is one of the parishes, which has failed to adopt kerbside recycling. A proposal to adopt it was rejected at a Parish Assembly on 17 October 2022 for a number of reasons, specifically that no briefing documentation of this complex matter was provided to parishioners in advance of the Assembly being held. The Assembly unanimously deferred adopting recycling, but no subsequent Assembly to consider this matter has been called".

The Minister acknowledged misconceptions about recycling: *"There is a perception from some that recycling just goes into the Energy from Waste plant, but that is not the case... education is key."*

Another [submission](#) drew particular attention to the fragmentation of service provision, noting that despite Jersey's small geographic size, at least twelve separate refuse and recycling contracts are currently in operation, alongside additional arrangements for the government and Ports of Jersey:



"I fully acknowledge that the services now provided by the Parishes are extremely limited but the fact Jersey, an island of 9 miles by 5, has at least 12 different refuse collection/recycling contracts is just not financial common sense. There is no common recycling scheme, which I accept is a decision made at local Parish level and one could argue is local democracy in action. All 12 Parishes plus the States plus the Harbours have refuse disposal vehicles or contractors doing that work just seems bizarre. In years gone by when there were people in the Parishes willing to undertake this work, I'm sure it seemed efficient and kept things local. But that's not the case now and there are only certain operators capable of undertaking this level of provision which makes competitive tendering not so competitive. Surely an island wide refuse and recycling provision would be more efficient and effective."

Overall, the submission suggested that an Island-wide approach to refuse and recycling collection could deliver greater efficiency, reduce duplication of investment, and improve consistency of service, while also offering better value for money. These observations broadly align with issues raised elsewhere in the Panel's evidence gathering and provide relevant context for the alternative delivery models articulated by the Parish of St Helier, including the potential for parish-led

collaboration rather than centralisation under government. Such an approach would retain parish accountability while potentially addressing procurement challenges, improving consistency of service, and reducing duplication of investment in vehicles, plant and specialist expertise.

Any consideration of this model would necessarily be a matter for the parishes themselves. Initial exploration could take place through the Comité des Connétables but, ultimately, participation would also require approval through Parish Assemblies.

At this stage, the Panel understands that no formal proposal has been developed; however, the position articulated by St Helier illustrates that alternatives to both the status quo and government centralisation exist and may merit further discussion.



Key finding 21: Evidence submitted by St Helier demonstrates that parish led collaboration or shared delivery models for refuse and recycling could offer an alternative to both parish provision and full government centralisation. Such models could improve consistency, reduce duplication and strengthen resilience, while retaining parish accountability. However, no formal proposals have yet been developed, and any such approach would require collective parish engagement and Parish Assembly approval.

Opportunities for government support or reform

The [Minister for Infrastructure confirmed](#) that a new waste strategy is being developed to improve recycling rates and reduce overall waste. Evidence presented to the Panel highlights several areas where government could support reform and strengthen operational delivery.

- **Standardised Service Level Agreements:** When there is duplication across government, Ports of Jersey and parish responsibilities particularly in relation to public bins on beaches and recreational areas, standardised Service Level Agreements should be put in place.
- **Education and public confidence:** Misconceptions about recycling remain a barrier to participation, with some parishioners believing that recyclable materials end up in the incinerator. Both parish representatives and the Minister stressed the importance of education: *“We have got work to do in terms of education. I think the schools are the place to be because in St. John when we launched that, it was the school children who persuaded parents and grandparents to recycle.”* The Minister confirmed that government invests in communication campaigns and intends to strengthen these efforts as part of the new strategy.
- **Addressing legislative gaps:** The Panel heard that municipal waste collection is not currently a licensed activity under the Waste Management (Jersey) Law 2005, leaving a regulatory gap. When asked whether the municipal collection should be a licensed activity, the Panel was advised that it would be down to the regulator, which is under the Minister for the Environment. The Minister for Infrastructure supported introducing a regulatory framework under the Department for Infrastructure to ensure compliance and accountability.
- **Strategic direction:** The Minister emphasised that reform is achievable but requires collaboration and stakeholder engagement, *“I do not think there are too many barriers. I think what we have to do is to work with the Comité des Connétables, work with the operatives and come up with a standard set of terms and conditions, if I can use that phrase, then consult with people and then roll something out. We are working towards that. Everything takes longer than you hope, but I do not think it is rocket science. We can look at models*

that work elsewhere, adopt a model and introduce a model but I do think you have got to take the public with you so that key stakeholder engagement is really, really important and that will feature in the paper [strategy] that we are putting together.”



Recommendation 10: Where refuse and recycling responsibilities intersect between parishes, government and Ports of Jersey, particularly in relation to beaches, recreational areas and public bins, standardised Service Level Agreements should be developed and adopted. These should clearly allocate responsibility, funding arrangements and performance expectations.



Recommendation 11: Government should strengthen Island-wide education and communication on recycling as part of the new waste strategy, working with parishes to ensure consistent messaging. This should explicitly address public misconceptions about recycling and the operation of the Energy Recovery Facility and make use of both digital and non-digital channels.



Recommendation 12: The government’s review of the Waste Management (Jersey) Law 2005 should determine whether municipal waste collection should be a licensed or regulated activity, with appropriate oversight and assurance arrangements. This would strengthen accountability and ensure consistent standards across all providers.



Recommendation 13: The Comité des Connétables should facilitate exploratory discussions between parishes on alternative delivery models for refuse and recycling services, including shared or lead-parish approaches. Any such arrangements would be subject to approval through Parish Assemblies.

Parks, Gardens and Play Parks

Current model

Parks, gardens and play spaces form an important part of Jersey’s community infrastructure, providing recreational areas and green spaces for residents and visitors. Responsibility for these spaces is shared between government and the parishes. Some sites, such as Howard Davis Park, Coronation Park and Millennium Town Park, are owned and maintained by government, while others are managed by individual parishes using their own resources or contractors. In some cases, parishes also undertake work on government-owned land under contract or through lease arrangements.

Government owned

Government owned/managed parks including those scheduled under the Policing of Parks (Jersey) Regulations 2005 are as follows:

Parish	Facility Description
Grouville	Longbeach Play Area
St Brelade	Beauport Headland
	Le Coutil de Grouin
	Les Creux Millennium Country Park

	Les Quennevais Playing Fields
	Noirmont
	Ouaisne
	Portelet
	Seafront Gardens St Brelade's Bay
	Sir Winston Churchill Memorial Park
	The Corbiere Walk inc Pont Marquet Country Park
St Clement	FB Playing Fields
St Helier	Glacis Field
	Liberation Square
	Millennium Town Park
	South Hill / Mount Bingham
	Springfield Sports Ground
St John	Public Land on La Route du Nord
	Sorel Headland
St Lawrence	Coronation Park
St Martin	Castle Green Gardens
	Gorey Gardens and Walks
St Ouen	Les Landes
St Peter	Beaumont Perquage
St Saviour	Grainville Playing Fields
	Howard Davis Park
Trinity	La Reste du Coutil des Vaux – Egypte
	Le Parc de la Petite Falaize
Multi	Les Mielles
	Promenade and Gardens – St Helier to St Aubin

Parish owned

Parishes manage a variety of parks, gardens, and play areas, with variation in scale, funding, and future plans. St Helier maintains its own parks and play areas and also undertakes work on government-owned sites, such as Millennium Park, under contract. Recent projects include two new play areas at Parade Gardens and planned upgrades to St Andrews Park.

St Martin oversees green spaces including glebe land (church land) and churchyards, supported by volunteers. Its recent playground upgrade featured a Viking Swing, developed through youth consultation, and future plans include a wildlife area. Maintenance is funded through parish rates, though the original playground was wholly funded by donations.

St Clement does not have designated parks but maintains green spaces around the Parish Hall and church grounds. The parish, through the Connétable, is exploring new opportunities for play provision, such as opening FB Fields and school facilities for community use.

St John manages its parks and play spaces through contractors, with annual maintenance costs of around £35,000 funded by parish rates. Facilities include the Church Play Park (under consideration for upgrade), a school play park funded by government, and a skate park originally financed through private fundraising but now maintained by the parish.

Other parishes, such as St Brelade, Trinity, St Ouen, Grouville, St Saviour, St Peter, St Lawrence, and St Mary also maintain green spaces or single parks, often funded through parish rates. Some, like St Saviour, are planning major new community parks with inclusive design features, while others report limited budgets and no plans for expansion. Accessibility is generally considered in new projects, though formal consultation mechanisms vary.

What works well and what could be improved

The [Jersey Play Plan 2025–2028](#) (published December 2025) provides a strategic vision for promoting play across the Island, however, the Panel believes that the strategy lacks detailed guidance and a clear investment roadmap. While the Plan recognises the role of parishes in provision and maintenance, it does not set out:

- ✗ A shared Island-wide framework for high-quality or inclusive play space standards
- ✗ A coordinated investment plan
- ✗ Clear mechanisms for joint decision-making between parishes and the government
- ✗ A structured approach for long-term funding, maintenance cycles, asset management, or replacement planning
- ✗ A method for addressing geographic inequalities in access to play spaces

Given that parishes own and manage a number of local play parks, the Panel believes that there is a strong case for closer, more formal collaboration.

[Evidence provided by the Minister for Infrastructure](#) highlights that while parish play areas are funded through local rates, they function as Island-wide community assets. The Minister was clear that families from across Jersey routinely use parish facilities and that this shared use provides a justification for parishes continuing to maintain them. However, he acknowledged that the public has limited understanding of who is responsible for funding and maintaining different play sites, which highlights a need for accountability structures to be better communicated.

The Panel found that government policy is increasingly focused on maximising access to school grounds, presumably as a low-cost way to expand play provision, though progress across parishes remains inconsistent: The Minister for Infrastructure said, *“We are desperately trying to get more access to the schools because if you come to St. John at a weekend, you can see children happily playing on the equipment in the school playing field, and I have been working with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to make that achievable in other schools around the Island. We have been successful in parts but not successful in others.”* This combination of factors strengthens the need for a more coordinated approach between parishes and the government, ensuring clear accountability, shared standards, and equitable access to quality play spaces across the Island.

Case study: Parish provision of play facilities - Sandy Park example

Sandy Park is a children's play area in the Parish of Grouville that had historically been maintained by the Infrastructure Department. When the lease for the site expired in June 2025, the Department gave the parish more than twelve months' notice that it would not be renewing the agreement. The Minister for Infrastructure explained that, in his view, it was no longer sustainable for the government to continue renting and maintaining individual parish playparks when many parishes already operate their own facilities. He noted that resourcing similar sites across the Island would require "*hundreds of thousands of pounds*" that the government did not have, and that parishes are generally well placed to provide and maintain local play spaces.

Given the importance of the facility to families in the area, and the limited number of play areas within the parish, a Parish Assembly was convened to determine whether Grouville should assume responsibility for Sandy Park. The Assembly attracted a significant turnout, reflecting the high level of public interest. The majority voted in favour of the parish taking over the site.

The decision demonstrated that Parish Assemblies can play a meaningful role in shaping local services, particularly when issues directly affect parishioners' daily lives. The outcome ensured that a well-used and valued play area remained available to the community, while illustrating how local democratic processes can influence practical decisions about service provision.

Sandy Park also highlights broader variation in how play facilities are provided across Jersey. While some parishes maintain multiple playparks, others do not operate any. The transition of Sandy Park into parish management therefore illustrates both the capacity of parishes to take on such amenities and the differing levels of provision across the Island.



Key Finding 22: There is considerable variation in the scale, quality, accessibility and future development of parish-managed play spaces. Some parishes are investing in new or upgraded facilities, often informed by community consultation, while others report limited budgets and no current plans for expansion. These differences risk creating geographic inequalities in access to high-quality and inclusive play provision.



Key Finding 23: While the Jersey Play Plan 2025–2028 provides a high-level vision for promoting play, it does not set out a clear Island-wide framework for standards, investment, asset management or long-term maintenance. The absence of detailed guidance and coordinated funding mechanisms limits the Plan's effectiveness in supporting consistent, equitable provision across parishes.

Collaboration examples

The [Minister for Infrastructure provided two examples](#) that illustrate how collaboration between the government and the parishes already operates in practice and how it could be strengthened further. The Minister highlighted Millennium Park as a clear working example of government–parish collaboration. Although the park is a government-owned public space, its ongoing maintenance is delivered by the Parish of St Helier under a formal contract. This arrangement demonstrates how parishes can play a direct role in the day-to-day stewardship of government assets where it is operationally beneficial. In describing the arrangement, the Minister stated: "*Millennium Park is subcontracted to the Parish of St Helier, so they work on a contract basis.*" St Helier also said that this is primarily for gardening services and that the parish had "*previously undertaken a garden*

maintenance service for La Collette Gardens (Government owned) and is now in negotiation for this land to be passed to the Parish on a long-term lease.”

This example, although only limited to St Helier, shows that effective operational partnerships can function and could be expanded or used as a model for similar agreements in other parishes.

The Minister also indicated openness to parishes taking responsibility for small parcels of land currently managed by government. He clarified that this would not involve transferring ownership but could instead be achieved through licence agreements that allow a parish to maintain land while legal title remains with the people of Jersey. Under this approach, maintenance costs would be met by the parish. It was noted that this model would be optional, and that government would retain responsibility for maintenance where a parish chose not to participate.

The Panel also explored whether, given the recognised gardening expertise within parishes, Infrastructure could make greater use of parishes as paid contractors rather than defaulting to private providers. The Minister confirmed that parishes are able to bid for maintenance work through existing procurement processes and would be eligible to tender for such contracts alongside other providers. The Panel’s intention was to explore whether parishes could be better utilised where they already hold relevant horticultural expertise, thereby supporting local income generation and strengthening collaboration.

The examples provided show that collaboration is already possible and, in some cases, already working effectively. With appropriate procurement processes, similar arrangements could offer opportunities for other parishes to maintain government owned land, generating revenue while ensuring consistent, locally responsive oversight of shared public spaces.



Key Finding 24: Examples such as the maintenance of Millennium Park by the Parish of St Helier demonstrate that operational collaboration between government and parishes can work effectively where clear contractual or licensing arrangements are in place. This shows that greater collaboration is achievable without transferring ownership or undermining parish autonomy.

Public feedback and perceptions

Public feedback relating to parks, gardens and play parks was limited but present across several engagement sessions. Participants offered occasional comments, including praise for new park development (e.g. La Pouquelaye), criticism where upgrades were lacking (e.g. Pomme d’Or Farm park), and views on funding responsibilities, with some residents suggesting parks should be government-funded while others expressed a desire for more children’s play facilities. Although these insights were not widespread, they demonstrate that outdoor spaces remain important to parishioners and that expectations regarding investment and responsibility vary across the community.

Opportunities for government support or reform

The Panel’s examination of parks, gardens and play spaces indicates some areas where government support, policy clarity and structural reform could strengthen delivery and improve outcomes across parishes:

- **Island-wide framework for play spaces:** The Panel considers that a coordinated, Island-wide framework would help to establish clear standards for play space quality and accessibility, provide more consistent approaches to funding and investment, clarify

ownership and maintenance responsibilities, improve public understanding, and support more equitable access to play opportunities, including through clearer and more consistent arrangements for community use of school grounds.

- **Strengthening operational collaboration with parishes in the management of parks and gardens:** The government could make greater use of parish gardening expertise by creating clearer pathways for parishes to maintain government-owned land, whether through contracts, as demonstrated at Millennium Park with St Helier, or through optional licence agreements for smaller parcels of land. This would provide opportunities for income generation, consistent land oversight and more locally responsive management of public spaces.



Key Finding 25: Some parishes possess significant horticultural and land-management expertise that could be utilised more systematically by government, either through contracts or optional licence arrangements. Greater use of parish capability could support income generation, provided appropriate procurement and governance arrangements are in place.



Recommendation 14: The government should ensure procurement processes actively enable parishes to bid for maintenance and horticultural contracts where they have relevant expertise. This would support local income generation and avoid default reliance on external contractors where parish capability exists.



Recommendation 15: The government and parishes should work collaboratively to identify gaps in access to play provision across the Island and consider how these might be addressed through targeted investment, shared use of school grounds, improved coordination between parishes, and prioritisation of inclusive and accessible play equipment. This work should be guided by evidence and integrated into an Island-wide framework.

Honorary Policing

Current model

The Honorary Police is one of Jersey's oldest civic institutions, with origins dating back to 1331, and remains a central component of the Island's community-based policing model. It operates as a volunteer service unique to Jersey, reflecting centuries of parish-level responsibility for policing, justice and local order. Although honorary officers are unpaid, they retain statutory authority to undertake a range of policing functions and continue to play a visible and active role in parish life.

Each of the Island's twelve parishes maintains its own Honorary Police force, with officers elected by parishioners. The system comprises three ranks - Centeniers, Vingteniers, and Constable's Officers - each carrying defined responsibilities. Centeniers hold the highest level of authority within the honorary structure, including the power to charge individuals, conduct Parish Hall Enquiries and bring cases before the Magistrate's Court. They retain all the powers of a police officer under the Police Force (Jersey) Law 1974. Vingteniers and Constable's Officers support the Centenier and fulfil a range of administrative, enforcement and community duties. The Connétable retains civic responsibility for ensuring effective parish policing but does not exercise operational leadership, which sits with the Chef de Police.

Honorary officers work closely with the States of Jersey Police, sharing several operational functions while remaining operationally independent. Their activities include foot and mobile patrols, speed and road checks, licensed premises inspections, searches for missing persons, event support, and cooperation with States of Jersey Police on joint operations. The States of Jersey Police has no statutory responsibility for Honorary Police governance, training, professional standards, discipline, equipment or vehicles, all of which fall to the parishes and the Attorney General's oversight framework.

Honorary officers may also act outside their parish boundaries in limited circumstances, reflecting an increasingly island-wide approach to policing pressures when required.

The Honorary Police system is funded largely through parish rates, which support equipment, uniforms and day-to-day operational costs. Parishes are responsible for all funding relating to equipment, uniforms, vehicles, training and operational costs. While the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund has occasionally provided ad-hoc support (for example, to purchase laptops), there is no government or States of Jersey Police budget for the Honorary Police.

Parishes are solely responsible for ensuring training and competence. Honorary officers may access some training delivered by SoJP, but SoJP is not responsible for Honorary Police training, does not fund it, and charges parishes for attendance where applicable. The funding model is well-established as parish-based, though levels of investment vary between parishes.

Training and accountability form integral parts of the model. Although volunteers, honorary officers are required to operate within Jersey's legal framework and are subject to oversight through parish structures and the Attorney General's framework. It is further noted that professional standards and discipline sit within parish structures and the Attorney General's framework; they do not fall under the remit of the SoJP Professional Standards.

What works well and what could be improved

The parish-based structure of the Honorary Police system enables strong local knowledge, community presence and direct accountability through the election of officers by parishioners. The system's volunteer model also provides significant public value; the States of Jersey Police (SOJP) [emphasised that the contribution](#) of the Honorary Police saves the government millions of pounds each year in staffing and operational costs. The ability of certain parishes such as St John, which reported a waiting list for recruits in 2024, to maintain high levels of civic engagement demonstrates that the model continues to hold community support in some parts of the Island.

However, the Panel also [received evidence](#) highlighting the vulnerabilities within the current system. Recruitment seems to be the most significant challenge. Despite isolated examples of strong engagement, overall numbers remain well below requirement, with approximately 250 active officers against a target of 320. Media reports³⁴ have raised concerns about the system's ability to provide adequate staffing for major events and to sustain the Parish Hall Enquiry system. Recruitment difficulties have been exacerbated by demographic pressures, competing work and family commitments, and reduced training and onboarding during the COVID-19 period.

In a letter to the Panel, the [Attorney General expressed](#) the view that the current parish-based funding model for the Honorary Police is unlikely to be sustainable in the long term. He highlighted variation between parishes in their approaches to fund honorary policing and noted recent difficulties in securing consistent funding for island-wide initiatives, such as recruitment campaigns.

³⁴ [ITV News Report \(June 2024\)](#), [Bailiwick Express Report \(January 2023\)](#), [Jersey Evening Post Report \(January 2022\)](#)

The Attorney General further stated that increased financial support from government or another source would enhance the operational effectiveness and sustainability of the Honorary Police.

The [Minister for Justice and Home Affairs confirmed](#) that future sustainability of the honorary force is an issue, *"I think there is no issue with looking at the sustainability of it. I could not actually say how long this has been going on, but I think it is because of the fact that people have jobs and are not able to be deployed as easily as they were in the past. I think we need to accept that that is reality and it may be that we need to adjust our thinking and actually what they are deployed to do".*

The [SOJP observed](#) that the greatest strength of the Honorary Police, the independence of the twelve parish forces, is also its greatest weakness. Variation in resources, training capacity, expectations and operational practices across parishes creates inconsistency. While some parishes maintain strong teams, others struggle to recruit, retain and train officers at the level required for modern policing demands. This unevenness poses risks to island-wide resilience and places pressure on neighbouring parishes and the SOJP during peak demand.

Training and capability gaps were also highlighted. Although honorary officers must attend a Foundation Course delivered in five modules, and the only mandatory test relates to the use of roadside breathalyser equipment. Other training, such as radio procedures or statement writing, is available but not required. The SOJP explained that they can recommend and offer limited training but that responsibility for ensuring honorary officers are safe, legally compliant and adequately equipped lies with the individual parishes. Without an Island-wide framework establishing enforceable minimum standards and a funded training model, the SOJP cannot ensure uniform competency across all honorary forces.

Resource and funding pressures present another area of challenge. [SOJP informed](#) the Panel that current budget constraints and reduced headcount limit the extent to which they can make training opportunities available. The force is prioritising its own staffing and operational needs and does not provide funding or grants to parishes. Uniforms and some equipment are sourced through SOJP for cost efficiency but are paid for by parishes. Vehicles are similarly procured through SOJP frameworks, with costs met from parish revenue streams. In circumstances where honorary officers attend the SOJP Foundation Course, the parishes are charged a set rate which is then apportioned between those attending.

[SOJP also highlighted](#) a strategic risk in that if the Honorary Police were unable to operate at current levels, the responsibility for their duties would fall to the States of Jersey Police. Given existing resource constraints, this would create immediate operational pressures and potential cost escalation for the government. As such, the sustainability of the Honorary Police is not solely a parish issue but a matter of Island-wide resilience.

The Panel explored whether the current parish-based funding model for the Honorary Police is equitable and sustainable. In response, the [Minister for Justice and Home Affairs](#) indicated that she was open in principle to alternative funding arrangements, including central funding, provided that any new model was applied consistently across the Island. She stated: *"I think, as I have said, I have no issue with a central funding system."*

However, the Minister emphasised that moving away from parish-based funding would require careful consideration to ensure fairness and uniformity between parishes. She cautioned that any alternative model would need to operate on an Island-wide basis, rather than allowing differing levels of provision between parishes, explaining: *"If you are going to fund it in a different way, then that needs to be across the board so that it is fair and equitable for each parish."*

In discussing the practical implications of such a change, the Panel asked whether funding for the Honorary Police could sit within the Justice and Home Affairs budget. The Minister confirmed that she had no objection in principle to this approach, while noting that any such arrangement would require an appropriate budget allocation to be made: *“I would not mind if it was in the budget, but the budget has to be provided.”*

When pressed further on whether she personally would support the inclusion of Honorary Police funding within her departmental budget, the Minister reiterated her neutral stance, indicating that she had no principled opposition to this option: *“Makes no difference to me whatsoever.”*



Key Finding 26: Funding for the Honorary Police is largely reliant on parish rates, resulting in significant disparities between parishes in access to vehicles, equipment and operational resources. Evidence from the Attorney General, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs and the States of Jersey Police indicates that this model is unlikely to be sustainable in the long term and limits the ability to fund Island-wide initiatives such as recruitment and training.



Key Finding 27: Training for Honorary Police officers is currently optional beyond basic mandatory requirements, with significant variation in uptake and capability across parishes. While the States of Jersey Police provide some training, responsibility for ensuring competence and legal compliance rests with individual parishes. The absence of an Island-wide training framework with enforceable minimum standards presents risks to operational effectiveness, safety and public confidence.



Key Finding 28: If the Honorary Police were unable to operate at current levels, responsibility for their functions would fall to the States of Jersey Police. Given existing resource constraints, this would create immediate operational pressures and financial implications for the government. The sustainability of the Honorary Police is therefore not solely a parish matter but a strategic issue for Island-wide policing resilience.

Collaboration examples

The Honorary Police work closely with the SOJP, particularly in community policing, traffic management, and support for public events. Their contribution was repeatedly described as valuable, a huge contribution to island life, and a vital asset within Jersey’s policing system.

However, the Panel heard that while individual relationships between Honorary officers and SOJP personnel are generally positive, operational collaboration has become inconsistent. The Comité des Chefs de Police noted that many new SOJP recruits including transferees from the UK arrive with limited understanding of the Honorary Police’s role, powers, or procedures, leading to missed opportunities for joint working. Honorary officers shared multiple examples where they were not contacted for nearby incidents despite being available to assist, reflecting inconsistent communication and deployment practices.

The Chefs also explained that stronger and more visible government support would improve collaboration. It was felt that awareness of the Honorary Police within government departments and among SOJP officers has diminished over time, and greater recognition of the system’s importance would help foster more effective partnership working.

In terms of cross-parish collaboration, exposure to crime, anti-social behaviour and traffic enforcement varies significantly by parish. Some parishes rely on Article 5A mutual aid agreements, enabling honorary officers to assist neighbouring parishes. However, not all parishes support these arrangements, which limits the island-wide consistency of honorary support and coordination. [SOJP told](#) the Panel that a more unified approach would enhance collaboration between parishes and SOJP.

The meeting with the Comité des Chefs de Police also highlighted structural issues affecting collaboration including an outdated Memorandum of Understanding. The Panel understand that the MoU is currently undergoing revision to better reflect operational realities and expectations.

Control room communication gaps were also cited by honorary officers as inconsistent. The Panel heard examples where nearby Honorary Police were not notified of road traffic collisions or community incidents. The Panel heard that this inconsistency limits effective joint deployment and reduces the system's efficiency.

Some rural parishes expressed frustration at being contacted less frequently for assistance compared to others, despite having officers available and possessing valuable local knowledge.

Public feedback and perceptions

The Panel did not receive direct evidence from the public regarding satisfaction with the Honorary Police system. Feedback gathered through pop-ups stalls and engagement sessions found that the majority of comments related to broader parish functions.

Nevertheless, a small number of comments gathered during outreach sessions provide useful insight into public perceptions. At the Waitrose St Saviour pop-up, one participant expressed the view that all policing should be undertaken by the States of Jersey Police, raising concerns about training and professionalism within the Honorary Police.

More generally, several participants across different engagements indicated that they did not understand the parish system. Such views align with evidence from the Chefs de Police, who noted that many Islanders lack a clear understanding of the Honorary Police's role, powers and purpose.

Opportunities for government support or reform

The Panel identifies several key areas where government support or reform could strengthen the honorary system, ensure greater consistency across parishes, and enhance Island-wide resilience.

- **Clarifying the role and purpose of the Honorary Police:** A consistent theme across the evidence was the lack of a shared, modern definition of what the Honorary Police are expected to do. The Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence (SoJP) said, *"I see huge value in the honorary service, but one of the questions I always come back to is I think if we put a straw poll and asked the public and the parishes the role of the Honorary Police, I think we would get lots of different answers."*

The Panel considers that a government-led piece of work, co-designed with the Comité des Connétables, SOJP and honorary leaders could define a clear Island-wide role description, core competencies and responsibilities appropriate for a 21st-century volunteer policing model. Such clarity would help support recruitment messaging, training design, and operational integration with SOJP.

- **Improved training for honorary officers and SOJP:** Post-foundation training for honorary officers is currently optional, inconsistent between parishes, and not structured around enforceable standards. SOJP explained that honorary training amounts to 28 hours over a few days, compared with over 600 hours for SOJP recruits. A government-supported, standardised training framework could improve consistency and operational safety. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs also confirmed she would support the introduction of mandatory training modules for SOJP officers on honorary policing.
- **Improving information-sharing and access to policing systems:** Honorary officers reported longstanding barriers to accessing basic operational information available to SOJP officers. Despite being vetted to national standards, they do not have access to real-time logs, incident history or intelligence that could improve safety and situational awareness.

Government could, in collaboration with the parishes, look at investing in secure IT solutions for honorary officers and a sustainable funding model for devices and licences.

- **Reviewing the funding model to ensure fairness and sustainability:** Funding for the Honorary Police is currently parish-based, resulting in significant inequalities. Wealthier parishes can fund modern vehicles and equipment; smaller parishes cannot. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs confirmed that each parish currently funds different levels of kit and equipment and that disparities exist in vehicles and resources across the Island. The Minister also said that she would support central funding in principle, provided it was fair and equal for all parishes.

A Government-explored funding model could include a central grant for essential equipment (uniforms, radios, IT, statutory kit) and a matched-funding scheme for vehicles. Although a political matter, the funding model could be integrated with Home Affairs budgets. This could reduce pressure on ratepayers, improve equity and strengthen the sustainability of the system.

- **Supporting recruitment and retention:** Recruitment pressures are a major risk to sustainability. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs acknowledged that honorary duties have changed and that there may be challenges in how volunteers balance demanding jobs with policing duties.

There may be scope for government to assist by improving public awareness of the role within the civil service and implementing consistent policies for honorary release.



Recommendation 16: The government, working with the Comité des Connétables, the States of Jersey Police (SOJP) and Honorary Police leadership, should develop a clear, modern statement of the role, purpose and core responsibilities of the Honorary Police. This should define what is expected of honorary officers in a 21st-century policing context and provide a consistent basis for recruitment, training, deployment and public understanding.



Recommendation 17: There should be a standardised, Island-wide training framework for Honorary Police officers, including mandatory core training requirements proportionate to their statutory powers and operational duties. This framework should be developed collaboratively with SOJP and supported by a sustainable funding model to ensure consistent competency, safety and legal compliance across all parishes.



Recommendation 18: The government, in collaboration with the Comité des Connétables, should review the current parish-based funding model for the Honorary Police. The review should consider options for central or hybrid funding arrangements, including the prioritisation of Honorary Police funding requests through the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund (COCF), to ensure the equitable provision of essential equipment, training, and core operational capability across all parishes, while maintaining local accountability.



Recommendation 19: The government should explore options to improve Honorary Police access to appropriate operational information and policing systems, subject to safeguarding and data-protection requirements. Investment in secure IT solutions and a sustainable funding model for devices and licences would enhance officer safety, situational awareness and effectiveness.



Recommendation 20: The government and parishes should work together to support recruitment and retention of Honorary Police officers through coordinated Island-wide initiatives. This should include improved public awareness of the role, consistent recruitment messaging, and consideration of policies to support honorary service alongside employment, including within the public sector.

9. Parishes and Strategic Policy Alignment

This chapter explores the role of parishes in supporting the delivery of government strategies and Island-wide priorities. It examines the extent to which parish activities align with objectives such as putting children first, environmental sustainability and public safety, recognising the independence of parishes while considering opportunities for stronger collaboration.

Parish role in delivery of government strategies

The parishes could play a key role in supporting the delivery of Island-wide strategies and priorities set by the government. As the parishes are independent and autonomous, their contribution to government-led strategies is a matter of choice rather than obligation. Evidence from the procureurs indicates that while some parishes consider government strategies in their decision-making, others cite statutory obligations and Parish Assembly decisions as their primary drivers.

The responses show wide variation across parishes in how, and whether, government priorities are taken into account. In St Saviour, [the procureurs are clear](#) that government strategies are not a formal consideration in financial decisions, stating: “No.our discretionary spending is insignificant.” This suggests a limited scope for alignment with broader government objectives. However, they do acknowledge isolated instances where government priorities have influenced spending, such as: “We have worked to enhance the Government’s Safer Routes to Schools project. In addition, we expect to incur costs connected with the Children and Young People Law (2022).”

St Helier’s [procureurs acknowledge that](#) while the parish is guided by its own strategic plan, government strategies are considered when they “align to agreed Parish Strategic Plan and strategy.” They add: “Parish funding is aligned to Government objectives when Government funding is provided, when the Parish and Government share common strategic objectives and outcomes, and when there is a legal or regulatory requirement to do so.” Examples include joint funding for urban renewal schemes and initiatives like the “Children First” programme and carbon neutrality efforts.

However, given their visibility within communities and their reach into households, parishes are well-placed to support the delivery of Island-wide priorities. The Panel considers that government has an important role in encouraging, facilitating and coordinating parish involvement where this would strengthen outcomes for children, families and communities.

The following sections set out how the parishes are already contributing to key government priorities, including putting children first, meeting environmental targets, enhancing public safety, supporting health and prevention, and reducing unnecessary administrative burdens.

Putting children first

The government first launched an eight-point Pledge to Put Children First in September 2018 which remains an active objective for the government today. The pledge holds Ministers, States Members and public service leaders to account for improving the care and upholding the rights of every child in the Island³⁵. It is also the vehicle for delivering the five outcomes of the Children’s Plan 2024 – 2027³⁶:



³⁵ [Putting Children First](#) – gov.je

³⁶ [Children and Young People’s Plan 2024 to 2027](#)

1. Live healthy, happy lives
2. Learn and achieve
3. Enjoy a decent standard of living
4. Feel safe and loved
5. Be included, respected and valued

As mentioned earlier in the report, parishes already provide a range of facilities and community spaces that contribute to children's daily lives and opportunities for play. Many maintain playgrounds, parks and green spaces that are routinely used by families and form an important part of local recreational provision. Many parishes also host seasonal community events, such as Liberation Day celebrations, summer fêtes, and Christmas activities.

In addition, parish halls play a role in supporting early years and youth activity by providing room facilities. Many are available for the community to book for playgroups and toddler sessions often run by voluntary organisations or local parent groups.

The Panel [sought evidence from Mark Capern](#), Associate Director of Young People's Services, on how the Jersey Youth Service works with parishes. He explained that collaboration is structured primarily through formal Parish Agreements, now in place with 11 of the 12 parishes, outlining the Youth Worker's role, shared funding arrangements, and governance through local Youth Project Committees. St Brelade remains the only parish without such an agreement. These partnerships have developed since the first agreement in St Peter in 1996, and recent investment has strengthened provision in rural parishes by converting part-time Youth Worker roles to full-time posts.

However, it was noted that engagement varies significantly between parishes. Many support Youth Service involvement in community events and work jointly on early-intervention outreach where antisocial behaviour arises.

The [submission highlights](#) disparities in infrastructure and funding models across the Island. Several Youth Centres operate in parish-owned buildings where the Youth Service pays rent (e.g. St Peter, St Ouen, St Mary, St John, St Lawrence, Trinity), while others, such as centres in St Martin, St Saviour, Grouville and St Clement, are based in government-owned buildings and fully funded by the Youth Service, including utilities and maintenance. St Brelade's Youth Centre is rented via Communicare, and St Helier operates a mixed model across multiple sites, including a mobile project and a forthcoming government-owned centre.

Parishes could make a meaningful contribution to the government's "Putting Children First" initiative by using their local reach to ensure children and young people's voices are heard and their wellbeing is supported.

Evidence shows that several parishes are already engaging directly with children and young people when planning or upgrading play spaces. St Martin provided the Panel with an example of youth engagement in designing new play facilities. They said that the parish had actively consulted with the local primary school, where children undertook a playground design project and submitted "wish list" ideas that were incorporated into the final design. The "Viking Swing" was also installed specifically as a direct result of consultation with the Youth Assembly and their Right to Play campaign.

Other parishes, including St Peter, St Clement, and St Saviour, indicated that they either consult or plan to consult schools, families, and young people before confirming future play area upgrades. Some parishes indicated that they do not currently involve children or families in decisions about

play provision. For example, St Lawrence stated that there is “*none*” when asked what consultation takes place with park users about the choice and type of playground equipment. Similarly, St Mary told the Panel that “*The playground is a typical child's play area and there is no apparent need for any consultation. The Youth & Community centre team manage the playground and would feed back any comments or suggestions to the Parish Hall*” in relation to its playground. In St Ouen, the parish explained, “*The Parish hasn't received any suggestions for alternative activities or play equipment since it was built in 2008.*”

Mr Capern emphasises the need for stronger youth participation in parish decision-making, observing that Connétables differ in their confidence and willingness to engage with children and young people. He said, “*From my personal experience, some Connétables have more confidence in engaging with children and young people than others. I believe that the Youth Worker in the Parish could be used more by the Parishes to engage and seek the views of young people on Parish matters and affairs.*”

The Associate Director of People's Services suggested several ways in which engagement with young people could be strengthened which should be explored by the Comité des Connétables and parishes:

1. Strengthen links with schools and youth groups

- Parishes could make use of school councils, which are elected bodies representing children and young people.
- Connétables could attend at least two school council meetings per year to hear directly from pupils.
- Connétables could also attend at least one session at their local youth project to gather young people's views.

2. Use consultation forums and digital tools

- Involving young people in regular feedback on parish issues, not only during formal consultations.
- Parishes could use online surveys, social media polls, and other digital engagement tools to make participation easy and accessible.
- Individual young people could be appointed to represent their peers on parish committees or boards.

3. Create opportunities for co-design and place-making

- Inviting children and young people to help design public play areas and parish spaces, ensuring facilities reflect their needs and ideas.

4. Adopt youth-centred best practices

- Using inclusive engagement approaches tailored to different age groups.
- Establishing feedback loops, where Connétables report back on how youth input influenced parish decisions.
- Moving beyond consultation towards shared decision-making, giving young people genuine influence where appropriate.
- Ensuring engagement is ongoing and embedded, rather than limited to one-off projects.

The Panel considers there to be clear value in establishing an Island-wide children, families and youth engagement protocol, supported by government and the Jersey Youth Service, including shared consultation tools, youth-friendly materials, and access to Youth Workers. Such a framework would support all parishes, regardless of size or capacity, to meaningfully involve children and young people in decisions that affect them.



Key Finding 29: Parishes contribute to the “Putting Children First” agenda through the provision of parks, playgrounds, green spaces, community events and the use of parish halls for early years and youth activities. These locally delivered facilities and activities form an important part of children’s everyday lives and support wellbeing, play and social inclusion at community level.



Key Finding 30: Formal Parish Agreements with the Jersey Youth Service are now in place in 11 of the 12 parishes, providing a structured basis for youth work delivery and governance. However, the nature and depth of engagement varies between parishes, and one parish currently operates without a formal agreement, resulting in inconsistency in youth provision and partnership working across the Island.



Key Finding 31: Evidence from the Jersey Youth Service indicates that Connétables differ in their confidence, skills and willingness to engage directly with children and young people. Where effective engagement occurs, it is often supported by Youth Workers; however, this resource is not consistently used as a mechanism for informing parish decision-making.



Key Finding 32: There is no consistent framework or guidance to support parishes in engaging children and young people in parish affairs. In the absence of shared tools, standards or expectations, engagement practices depend largely on local initiative, capacity and individual leadership, resulting in uneven opportunities for children’s voices to be heard across the Island.



Recommendation 21: The government, working with the Comité des Connétables and the Jersey Youth Service, should develop an Island-wide protocol to support parish engagement with children, young people and families. The protocol should provide practical guidance, shared tools and youth-friendly materials to help parishes meaningfully involve children and young people in decisions that affect them.

Environmental targets

The [Common Strategic Policy 2024–2026](#) emphasises Jersey’s commitment to addressing the climate emergency through the Carbon Neutral Roadmap. The States Assembly has pledged to respond to this challenge “with energy and pace,” aligning with the Paris Agreement and aiming for net-zero emissions by 2050. To honour this commitment, the government has made it clear that delivering the actions in the Carbon Neutral Roadmap must remain a top priority.



Evidence submitted to the Panel shows that St Helier has already taken steps to embed sustainability into its operations. The parish reported that it has “*reduced [its] carbon emissions considerably*” as part of recent service improvements and highlighted the establishment of a Carbon Neutrality Working Group, which brings parishioners together to shape priorities and hold the parish to account.

While smaller parishes may have more limited, St Helier's example demonstrates the potential for parishes to play a stronger community-level role in supporting the Island's carbon-reduction ambitions. Its experience suggests that even modest steps, such as structured working groups or operational changes to reduce emissions, can contribute meaningfully to wider environmental goals. There may be value in exploring how good practice and learning from St Helier can be shared across all parishes, enabling each to "do their bit" and contribute to the government's climate commitments in ways proportionate to their size and resources. Parishes could also lead by example through sustainable parish operations.

Public safety

The [Common Strategic Policy 2024–2026](#) outlines key priorities under three wellbeing categories (Community, Economic, Environmental). Public safety is embedded within the broader Community wellbeing priority which is one of the government's core objectives. The CSP commits Ministers to maintain effective, cost-efficient, and responsive public services, which includes safety and emergency services³⁷. The Chief Minister said:



- ” In the area of Community Wellbeing we are looking to address issues impacting Children, Health and Wellbeing, and Safety and Security.
- “ In ensuring a safer Island, we are also committed to implement the recommendations from the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce Report.
- ” Alongside the CSP, business as usual activities will continue across the public sector, with focus on the day-to-day work where Islanders expect efficient, cost effective and responsive service; in healthcare, education, infrastructure, disability and inclusion, public safety, and the environment³⁸.
- “

While island-wide services, legislation, and enforcement are delivered by government, the parishes already perform several important functions that contribute to the everyday safety of the community. Each parish provides its own Honorary Police, and their presence at parish events, roads inspections, and incident response adds a layer of visible, community-led assurance that complements the States of Jersey Police.

Some parishes also operate community support teams which routinely provides welfare checks, supports vulnerable residents, and assists with practical needs. Although these services are not formally positioned as public safety mechanisms, they enhance resilience by ensuring that people who may be at higher risk remain connected and receive support.

The role of parishes during emergencies is well established. Parish Halls act as community hubs and have historically been used for information sharing, shelter, coordination, and public assistance during severe weather events or service disruptions. Their existing communication channels, volunteer networks, and proximity to residents position parishes to support government in maintaining local organisation, distributing information rapidly, and supporting vulnerable individuals during crises.

³⁷ Chief Minister's opening speech to the Assembly on P.21/2024 – Common Strategic Policy 2024 - 2026

³⁸ Chief Minister's opening speech to the Assembly on P.21/2024 – Common Strategic Policy 2024 - 2026

This support provides targeted, locally informed capacity that underpins effective emergency planning and response. Parishes' detailed understanding of local communities and infrastructure enables close collaboration with government in preparing for and responding to emergencies.

Youth safety is another area where parish-level involvement already takes place. As highlighted by the Associate Director of Young People's Services, Youth Workers frequently collaborate with parishes to address anti-social behaviour and provide outreach when needed. This demonstrates that parishes can play a constructive role in early intervention and in strengthening young people's safety.

Although the Panel's evidence did not show extensive parish-led safety strategies, the activities that do exist suggest that parishes could, with the right support, make a wider contribution. Building on their existing networks, parishes could help support safe travel routes to schools, particularly through collaboration with government on infrastructure changes, traffic calming, and child-friendly public spaces. They could also utilise their close knowledge of local residents to identify vulnerable individuals who may require additional support or welfare checks during emergencies.

Case study: Red line in Grouville

In May 2025, a red line was painted along sections of two rural lanes near Grouville School as part of a parish road-safety initiative. The marking was intended to create a clearer distinction between pedestrian and vehicle areas on lanes with narrow verges and limited visibility. According to the Connétable, red was chosen for its high visibility and its ability to draw drivers' attention to potential hazards.

Although the measure was designed to enhance public safety the introduction of the marking generated a range of responses. Some parishioners questioned its visual impact within a rural setting, while others considered the increased visibility beneficial for pedestrians, including children travelling to and from school.

A point raised during the publicity was that parishioners had not been informed in advance about the markings. The absence of prior communication contributed to uncertainty about the purpose and rationale for the change. While the safety intention was generally recognised, the limited engagement highlighted the importance of providing clear information before making noticeable alterations to public spaces.

Overall, the example illustrates both the potential of parish-led interventions to respond to local safety concerns and the value of communicating with residents in advance. Ensuring that parishioners are aware of planned works can help provide context, support understanding, and reduce uncertainty when visible changes are introduced.



Key Finding 33: Parishes' close knowledge of their communities positions them well to support preventative public safety measures, such as identifying vulnerable individuals during emergencies, supporting safer routes to schools, and contributing to child-friendly and safer public spaces. However, this potential is not currently supported by structured guidance or coordination mechanisms.

Health prevention

The government's prevention-first approach, set out in [Seizing the Opportunity: A Population Health Prevention Strategy for Jersey 2023–2027](#), positions early intervention, healthier environments, and community-level action as essential to improving health outcomes and reducing long-term pressure on services. The strategy outlines the importance of tackling preventable illness by encouraging healthier behaviours from childhood onwards, expanding vaccination programmes, and making greater use of monitoring technologies. As [confirmed by the Minister for Health and Social Services](#), the intention is to reshape Jersey's system so that prevention becomes a core component of everyday health delivery, even if this requires greater upfront investment.



"In addition, we are looking to introduce a range of measures to focus on illness prevention. This will involve encouraging lifestyle changes from childhood, a better patient monitoring using technology, more vaccinations and other various initiatives. This should help to reduce health costs in the long term. This will require more money in the initial stages, and that is something that will have to be dealt with and addressed when the work is complete".

While responsibility for health services and island-wide campaigns lies with government, the prevention agenda could also rely on local connections and the ability to reach people where they live. The parishes, through their proximity to communities could become valuable partners in extending the reach of government's preventative ambitions. Parishes already manage community spaces, communicate regularly with residents, and maintain support networks through Honorary Police, Community Support Teams and parish offices. These existing structures could provide practical channels for the government for reinforcing health messaging and encouraging healthier behaviours.

For example, parishes could help strengthen government-led health campaigns by using parish newsletters, websites, social media, and parish forums to promote information on healthy eating, physical activity, winter wellbeing, vaccinations, and stopping smoking. Their management of footpaths, green spaces, and community facilities also creates opportunities to support active lifestyles by encouraging walking, cycling, and outdoor recreation. In parishes that operate Community Support Teams, volunteers are already assisting isolated or vulnerable individuals; with training and clear protocols, these teams could help signpost residents to early help, wellbeing checks, or preventative health services.

Because parish officials often have a close understanding of local residents, they could also help identify individuals or families who may be at heightened health risk, for example, older people living alone, those struggling with transport, or households facing barriers to accessing services. This early identification does not replace clinical services but can help ensure that people are directed to the right government support sooner.

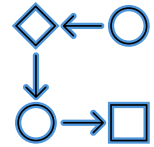
Finally, if the government were to pilot new health-prevention schemes parishes could act as test sites, especially in areas with strong community participation. Their established infrastructure and networks of volunteers, honorary officers and support teams could help embed these initiatives quickly and effectively at a local level. This suggests that existing community roles within the parish mean they could provide a valuable complementary function in helping government deliver a prevention-first agenda, if supported and resourced appropriately.



Key Finding 34: There is limited evidence of parishes being formally engaged in the delivery of health prevention objectives. While parish activities may incidentally support healthier behaviours, there is no consistent framework, guidance or expectation for parish involvement in prevention-focused work by the government.

Reducing red tape

Reducing red tape and streamlining administrative processes is a key commitment within the [Common Strategic Policy 2024 - 26](#), reflecting the findings of the [Barriers to Business report](#), which highlighted the need for clearer procedures, improved collaboration, and simpler public-facing systems. While these reforms are led by government, the parishes could play a role in easing bureaucracy for both Islanders and businesses.



There is already evidence that parishes have begun modernising some of their processes to reduce administrative burden. Online dog licences is one example where all parishes are now participating in a centralised digital system that allows residents to apply and pay for dog licences electronically, receive email reminders, and update their details online.

Digitisation is also evident in driving licence renewals, which can now be completed through the shared e.parish.je portal. This online service allows Islanders to renew their licence, upload photographs, pay fees electronically, and avoid in-person visits unless preferred.

Given their close relationship with communities, coordination between government and parishes could offer scope to reduce duplication, particularly in areas such as planning consultations, event licensing, and roadside permissions. Where systems differ across parishes, or where residents must navigate both government and parish requirements, a more unified approach could support consistency and clarity.



Key Finding 35: Where residents and businesses are required to navigate differing parish requirements, or both parish and government processes, this can create confusion and unnecessary administrative burden. Areas such as event licensing and roadside permissions illustrate where inconsistent or overlapping processes risk undermining the aim of reducing red tape.

Variation across parishes and the impact on government strategy

The housing and tenure data from the 2021 Census illustrates the differing characteristics of the parishes and provides contextual information relevant to both parish administration and island-wide service planning. Variations in housing type, density and tenure contribute to differing patterns of demand for services and facilities at parish level, which in turn can shape how parishes interact with and contribute to government-led initiatives.

These differences highlight the importance of ongoing dialogue between the government and the parishes, particularly where responsibilities for service delivery, infrastructure or community facilities overlap. Parishes with higher proportions of social housing or private rental accommodation, such as St Helier and St Saviour, may experience different community pressures compared to parishes with predominantly owner-occupied housing. These differences may influence the nature of engagement between parishes and government on matters such as housing support, community development and access to services.

Differences in housing density also have implications for how facilities and services are delivered locally. For example, higher-density urban areas with a greater proportion of flats may have increased demand for accessible community spaces, play areas and shared amenities, while more rural parishes may prioritise services related to transport connectivity, road maintenance or access to essential facilities. In such cases, effective coordination between government and parishes can support delivery that reflects local circumstances.

In [evidence provided to the Panel](#), however, the Chief Minister reiterated the independent role of the parishes, noting that *“the parishes operate as independent to Government.”* The Treasury Minister also highlighted the importance of parish autonomy, stating that *“It is that very independence that probably would make it difficult for Government to come in and say: “We do not like what you are doing, we want the 12 of you to do something differently.””*.

Although it is clear that the government values parish independence and distinctiveness, the evidence suggests it places less emphasis on the potential benefits of structured, shared communication channels or joint delivery on key initiatives. [The Chief Minister and Treasury Minister consistently described](#) current arrangements as working well and expressed caution about intervention. The Treasury Minister said: *“Government cannot really impose itself on the parishes because the parishes are independent.”* She also reinforces this localised, Constable-led approach: *“..a lot of what each parish does depends very much on the needs of the community, what the community wants, what the community needs and also I think the nature of the Constable. I think the Constables themselves, the Constables’ own interests where they see the level of need, where they want to promote things. The Constable is a very big player in that.”* In terms of government led initiatives, the Chief Minister also said: *“They are not obliged to operate alongside the common strategic priorities.”*

This suggests that collaboration between government and the parishes tends to be informal, officer led and dependent on individual relationships rather than embedded systems. The Panel considers that this limits opportunities for more coordinated delivery of island-wide priorities through the parish system, particularly given the varied demographic and service needs across the Island’s communities.



Key Finding 36: Parishes are well placed to support the delivery of government strategies relating to children, communities, health prevention and environmental sustainability. However, engagement with island-wide strategies varies, and clearer frameworks, guidance and supporting mechanisms would help maximise the contribution parishes can make without undermining their independence.



Recommendation 22: Government should establish more structured and consistent engagement arrangements with the parishes, through the Comité des Connétables, when developing and implementing island-wide strategies. This should include early engagement, clarity on expectations, and practical support mechanisms that reflect differing parish demographics and capacities.

10. Administrative and Regulatory Functions at Parish Level

This chapter reviews administrative and regulatory functions delivered by parishes, including firearms licensing, alcohol licensing and the policing of public spaces. It assesses whether current arrangements are fit for purpose, consistent and aligned with modern regulatory expectations, and highlights areas where reform or clarification may be required.

Overview of administrative and regulatory functions of parishes

Parishes carry out a wide range of statutory, regulatory and administrative functions that operate alongside their wider community roles. These functions are set out in parish legislation and long-established practice. The responsibilities include the issuing of firearms certificates and alcohol licences, the oversight of public spaces and local infrastructure, and key roles in regulatory processes such as planning and the administration of roads.

Firearms certification

The [Firearms \(Jersey\) Law 2000](#) was adopted by the States in 1999 to create a modern regulatory framework governing the manufacture, acquisition, transfer, possession and use of firearms, imitation firearms and related ammunition. Its purpose was to provide public reassurance while avoiding unnecessary barriers for individuals seeking to use firearms lawfully³⁹.

The Law introduced new requirements, including the obligation for all shotgun owners to hold a firearms certificate regardless of where the firearm is used. It also created specific offences relating to unsafe handling or possession, such as carrying a firearm in a public place without lawful authority, reckless discharge, and trespassing with a firearm. Substantial penalties were established for non-compliance⁴⁰.

Under the Law, responsibility for issuing firearms certificates sits with each of the 12 Connétables, who must be satisfied that an applicant:

- is fit to be entrusted with a firearm;
- has a good reason to possess it; and
- does not pose a danger to public safety or the peace.

Where an applicant is the Connétable or a close relative, responsibility transfers to the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs. Certificates are valid for five years and cost £45 as set out in the Firearms (General Provisions) (Jersey) Order 2011. Applications require two referees and a £20 fee is payable where the total number of firearms increases, as confirmed in Law⁴¹.

Connétables are required to notify the Police Chief Officer within 21 days⁴² of issuing, renewing, revoking or varying a certificate. The Chief Officer maintains the Central Firearms Index (CFI), which records all registered firearms and certificate holders.

³⁹ [Review of the Firearms \(Jersey\) Law 2000, and relevant processes – 6th December 2006](#)

⁴⁰ [Review of the Firearms \(Jersey\) Law 2000, and relevant processes – 6th December 2006](#)

⁴¹ [Review of the Firearms \(Jersey\) Law 2000, and relevant processes – 6th December 2006](#)

⁴² [Firearms \(Jersey\) Law 2000](#)

The States of Jersey Police (SoJP) have a limited statutory role confined to maintaining the CFI. Any additional administrative work undertaken for parishes such as criminal history checks, intelligence checks and administrative processing is not statutory and is carried out without dedicated funding or cost recovery. [The SoJP said](#): “*This is the only role required to be completed under the current legislation, however the CFI department carries out a significant number and range of additional administration roles on behalf of the Parishes in order to ensure the Connétables have all the relevant information required to make their decision for the issuing of a firearms certificate*”.

The Panel notes that, as of 4th June 2025, there were [1,096 active certificates covering 8,243 firearms](#) and component parts recorded on the Central Firearms Index. Evidence from the [public hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs](#) reinforced the scale and significance of firearms licensing with the Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence identifying that firearms licensing is highly complex and the importance of consistent decision-making, he said: “*this is a really difficult and complex piece of work and responsibility, which is why in terms of the overall mitigation that we are trying to further develop with the Constables - and we have already spoken about a possible review of the firearms legislation in the future - it is really important to on every single occasion apply consistent decision-making to the rules and regulations and the guidance with regards to firearms licensing.*”

Complexities in the current framework

The current system relies heavily on parish-based decision-making and the individual judgement of Connétables. Although SoJP conducts background checks, the Law does not require Connétables to carry out physical inspections of premises where firearms or ammunition are stored. Decisions therefore rely significantly on the Connétable’s judgement of the individual’s suitability, supported by information provided by SoJP⁴³.

Applications are processed through parish halls, while background information is gathered by SoJP’s CFI department, which is staffed by a single officer within existing SoJP resources. Security inspections are typically undertaken by Honorary Police or parish representatives, with SoJP generally limited to higher-risk cases.

While information sharing between SoJP and Connétables is ongoing, the Law provides [no explicit mechanism to suspend a firearms certificate](#). If concerns arise, Connétables may request voluntary surrender or impose amended conditions, but these measures sit outside a formal statutory suspension framework.

During the hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs structural and operational limitations within the current framework were highlighted. SoJP confirmed that, although they provide advice and intelligence to support parish decision-making, they have no statutory role in assuring compliance with firearms licensing guidance, and do not monitor how consistently the 12 Connétables apply agreed best practice:



Deputy H.M. Miles:

“Does States of Jersey Police ever ask the Connétables any questions about how they are each following that guidance when it comes to firearms?”

⁴³ [Review of the Firearms \(Jersey\) Law 2000, and relevant processes – 6th December 2006](#)

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

“No, that is not our role. But we have day-to-day conversations with the Constables with regards to perhaps a situation that the Constable wishes to discuss with us. I mentioned before that our firearms registry officer will probably speak to a number of different parishes on a daily basis to help the Constables in their decision-making. But all of that decision-making is anchored on the law and all of that decision-making is anchored on the good practice guidance. The important thing is that through that day-to-day work that the 12 parishes make similar or the same decision in each given set of scenarios.”

This evidence points to a system in which responsibility is devolved without corresponding mechanisms for oversight or assurance, increasing the potential for inconsistent decision-making. While the Comité des Connétables has developed a [Procedure for Connétables](#) to use when determining applications for firearm certificates (including grants, renewals, and variations), approved in 2020, there is limited evidence of how compliance with this Procedure is monitored or assured in practice. It is unclear whether the Procedure is mandatory, subject to regular review, or supported by standardised training.

Inconsistency in licensing conditions was also identified, particularly in relation to ammunition storage. Although around 90% of certificates restrict firearm use to approved ranges, many licence holders remain permitted to store ammunition at home, a practice already discontinued in other jurisdictions, such as Guernsey, as a risk-reduction measure.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

That question is: what is the necessary reason for someone to hold ammunition at home, when 90 per cent of the time they can take their firearm to a range, acquire ammunition at the range, shoot the weapon and then take it home? In terms of reducing the risk, that fundamentally reduces the risk because if there is no ammunition in the home environment, then there is no opportunity for something that happens outside of the club environment. I think that is fundamental to this piece of work that we are working on at the present time.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it is fair to say that some Constables have already been doing exactly that anyway.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Which raises the issue about consistency again, does it not? Because if you look at a shooter, if you live in a particular parish and you are under a certain set of circumstances, but if you live in a different parish you may have another set of circumstances whereby you are able to keep ammunition at home, I think that comes back to the issue about the legislation and the kind of urgency for that....At the moment the resource that you have dedicated to firearms in the States of Jersey Police amounts to one person.

Chief Inspector, Operational Support and Director of Intelligence:

Correct.

The evidence suggests that such conditions are applied unevenly across parishes, reinforcing concerns about variation in risk management. [SoJP informed the Panel that](#), following engagement with the Comité des Connétables a new policy was announced on 1st January 2026 whereby all firearms certificates would be issued without ammunition by default. Applicants wishing to possess

ammunition would need to apply to their Connétable and provide proof of regular club attendance. In most cases, only a minimal amount of ammunition would be authorised for home storage.

While SoJP recognises this as a positive step, it considers that the policy does not go far enough. In evidence, [SoJP expressed concern](#) that continued permission for recreational shooters to store ammunition at home, even under restricted conditions, falls short of a zero-ammunition risk reduction model and does not fully align with approaches advocated by local and international experts. From a professional standpoint, SoJP described the amendments as disappointing, noting that they do not adequately address core risks identified through several years of review.

Opportunities for change

Evidence received suggests growing support for reform of the governance model underpinning firearms licensing. [A submission](#) questioned whether Connétables should continue to hold primary responsibility, arguing for a system that retains local consultation but centralises licensing authority within government: *“If the law is to be updated for security reasons and to increase the charges, given the obligations involved in licensing guns (a good thing), then consideration should be given to including consultation of the Constable within the process but taking gun licensing responsibilities away from the Constables and vesting them centrally.”*

The [Minister for Justice and Home Affairs expressed](#) a clear view that firearms licensing should move away from the parishes to a centralised system, citing the need for fairness, proper management and consistency across the Island: *“....I think it should be a central location in order that it can be properly managed and it is fair and across the board. In actual fact, from my perspective, I think that firearms should be managed from a central location.”* This position reflects concerns about variation in decision-making, oversight and risk management under the current arrangements.

Evidence submitted by the SoJP also point to practical opportunities for immediate risk reduction, including tighter controls on ammunition possession where firearms are restricted to range use. [SoJP recommend that](#) *“A centralised, statutory approach to firearms and ammunition licensing is urgently needed to ensure consistency, reduce risk, and protect public safety. The lessons from historical incidents and recent events abroad must inform Jersey’s policy, not only to prevent tragedy but to demonstrate leadership in public safety.”*

The [Comité des Connétables has defended](#) the continued involvement of Connétables in firearms licensing, arguing that parish-based decision making allows for the use of local knowledge and community awareness that may not be available in a fully centralised system. The Comité highlighted the existence of a common procedural manual used by Connétables and noted recent efforts to improve consistency in licensing practices.

The Comité also expressed frustration at delays in progressing legislative amendments identified as necessary to modernise the firearms framework, noting that responsibility for bringing forward such amendments rests with government. In its view, these delays have contributed to some of the operational challenges identified in evidence to the Panel.

Notwithstanding the Comité’s views, the Panel believes that the evidence indicates a clear opportunity to modernise the firearms licensing system. This should strengthen oversight, standardise decision-making, and reinforce public confidence through a transparent and consistently applied regulatory framework.



Key Finding 37: The current statutory framework places primary responsibility for firearms certification with individual Connétables, relying heavily on personal judgement at parish level. While the States of Jersey Police provides intelligence and administrative support, there are no statutory mechanisms to assure consistency, monitor compliance with guidance, or oversee how decisions are applied across the twelve parishes.



Key Finding 38: Although the Comité des Connétables has developed a Procedure for firearms certification, there is limited evidence that compliance with this Procedure is mandatory, monitored or supported by standardised training. This reliance on non-statutory guidance, without assurance mechanisms, limits its effectiveness in managing risk.



Key Finding 39: Risk-reduction practices, such as restrictions on ammunition storage, have historically been applied inconsistently across parishes. Although a new policy introduced in January 2026 represents progress towards tighter controls, evidence from the States of Jersey Police indicates that current arrangements do not fully reflect best practice or achieve optimal risk reduction.



Key Finding 40: Evidence from the States of Jersey Police, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, and public submissions indicates increasing support for reform of the firearms licensing system. In particular, there is recognition that the current parish-based model struggles to deliver the consistency, oversight and risk management expected of a modern firearms regulatory regime.



Recommendation 23: This recommendation is made in two stages. Stage 1 focuses on strengthening public safety, consistency and accountability in firearms certification through immediate governance improvements. Stage 2 provides for longer-term structural reform.



Stage 1 - The Comité des Connétables, working with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, should strengthen the governance arrangements surrounding the issuing of firearm certificates by Connétables. This should include regular review of the existing Procedure, standardised training for Connétables, and the introduction of mechanisms to monitor compliance and consistency of decision-making across parishes.



Stage 2 - The government should undertake a comprehensive review and reform of the firearms certification system, with the aim of strengthening oversight, standardising decision-making, and reinforcing public confidence through a transparent and consistently applied regulatory framework. The review should ultimately determine whether primary responsibility for firearms and ammunition licensing should be transferred away from individual parishes to a centralised, statutory authority.

Alcohol licensing

Alcohol licensing in Jersey is currently governed by the Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974 and operates through a shared model involving central administration, parish engagement, and the Royal Court's Licensing Assembly.

Applications for new liquor licences must be submitted to the Treasurer of the States. Once received, applications are forwarded to the relevant parish, where the Connétable is required to convene a Parish Assembly. This Assembly allows parishioners to hear details of the application and raise comments or objections. The views expressed at the Parish Assembly are formally reported to the Licensing Assembly, which is responsible for determining whether a licence should be granted⁴⁴. Parishioners who speak at the Parish Assembly are entitled to appear before the Licensing Assembly when the application is considered.

Liquor licences are granted for one year and expire annually on 24 December. Applications for renewal must be submitted to the Treasurer of the States between 5 October and 5 November. Unlike new applications, renewals are not referred to Parish Assemblies⁴⁵.

Where a licensed manager is required, or where there is a change of manager, applicants are expected to consult their legal representative, who notifies the Connétable so that the relevant formalities can be completed⁴⁶.

Evidence provided from the parishes indicates that while all parishes operate within the same statutory framework, the nature and extent of parish involvement varies in practice. Larger parishes tend to operate more structured and administratively intensive processes, while smaller parishes report fewer applications and more limited engagement. Across all parishes, however, the Parish Assembly and the Connétable play a central role in facilitating community input and assessing the suitability of applicants. St Ouen explains: *“The Connétable is responsible for ensuring that the applicant is a ‘fit and proper person’. This is carried out by an interview, accompanied by a disclosure.”*

At the time of this review, significant legislative reform is under active consideration. The [Draft Alcohol Licensing \(Jersey\) Law 202– \(P.112/2025\)](#) has been lodged and is due for debate, accompanied by proposed amendments. The original draft law would have abolished the Licensing Assembly and transferred decision-making responsibility to a central regulatory authority, the Jersey Alcohol and Gambling Commission. However, the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development has since lodged a [Fourth Amendment](#) that removes all references to the Gambling Commission, deletes its role entirely, and replaces the proposed regulatory authority with an “authorised person” within the States administration responsible for regulating alcohol. This represents a substantial change to the future licensing framework and departs from the Commission-based model initially proposed.

Complexities in the current framework

The evidence received by the Panel highlights several complexities within the current alcohol licensing framework.

While the statutory process is consistent across the Island, parish-level practices vary considerably. Differences were reported in how applications are managed, the extent of pre-application engagement, the criteria emphasised at Parish Assemblies, and the degree of administrative support offered to applicants. Although some parishes describe detailed, structured processes, others adopt a more limited consultative role.

St Helier note that applicants often begin by contacting the Parish Secretary. The parish coordinates inspections, structural surveys, alfresco permit support, and manager registration. St Saviour

⁴⁴ [Liquor licence | Parish of St Helier](#)

⁴⁵ [Liquor licence | Parish of St Helier](#)

⁴⁶ [Liquor licence | Parish of St Helier](#)

describes a more consultative role: *“The Parish acts solely as a consultee and may request applicants to attend a Parish Assembly.”* St Brelade, St John, and St Martin detail step-by-step procedures involving initial meetings with the Connétable, inspections, Parish Assembly votes, and submission of minutes to the Licensing Bench.

Assemblies typically assess the type and category of licence, location of premises, noise, traffic, and community impact. St Clement lists concerns such as *“noise, traffic, opening hours, delivery hours, public safety,”* while St Martin highlights *“the potential impacts the licence may have upon the immediate vicinity and neighbourhood.”* St Helier states there are *“no set criteria,”* allowing parishioners to ask questions freely. These often relate to *“expertise of the person running the establishment, the hours of operation, how they will ensure that noise matters don’t occur.”* St Mary and Trinity note that Assemblies are likely to focus on *“noise and traffic implications”* and *“effect on immediate neighbouring properties.”*

The role of the Connétable is both pivotal and broad, encompassing chairing Parish Assemblies, assessing whether applicants are fit and proper persons, and ensuring compliance with statutory requirements. In higher-volume parishes, some of these functions are necessarily delegated, while in smaller parishes the Connétable is often closely involved in each application.

The licensing framework is also widely regarded as complex and inflexible. Evidence referenced in the current reform proposals identifies longstanding concerns with the 1974 Law, including its multiple licence categories, limited policy guidance, and the need for applicants to hold several licences to reflect modern business models. These structural features place significant reliance on legal interpretation and can prolong the application process.

The reform proposals themselves have become more complex following the Minister’s [Fourth Amendment](#). While the original draft proposed the creation of a centralised regulatory authority (the renamed Alcohol and Gambling Commission), the amendment removes this body entirely and instead introduces an “authorised person” model, alongside a new Alcohol Policy Group responsible for developing an Alcohol Policy Framework. This significantly alters the structure of the proposed system and distances the final model from both the existing Licensing Assembly structure and the initial vision for a Commission-led approach.

Opportunities for change

The impending debate on the alcohol licensing legislation presents an opportunity to modernise the regulatory framework while clarifying the respective roles of parishes and other authorities.

The Panel notes that there is broad consensus that the existing Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974 is no longer fit for purpose and that reform is necessary. The draft Alcohol Licensing (Jersey) Law 202– seeks to address this by simplifying licence categories, enabling more flexible and proportionate enforcement, and relocating alcohol policy guidance within the remit of Government and the States Assembly. It also proposes maintaining parish involvement through mandatory Parish Assemblies and formal consultation.

The Comité des Connétables’ amendment however reflects a different model, emphasising local determination and seeking to preserve parish autonomy by designating Connétables as the determining authorities, supported by an island-wide alcohol policy guidance statement approved by the States Assembly. This approach aims to retain local sensitivity while relying on policy guidance and appeal mechanisms to manage consistency.

The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development has highlighted the risk that multiple determining authorities could lead to inconsistent outcomes and reduced regulatory certainty. The Minister has also emphasised the benefits of a single regulatory authority in enabling timely decision-making, clearer appeals processes, and proportionate enforcement tools.

The Panel notes that the outcome of the States debate will determine whether Jersey adopts a more centralised, parish-led, or hybrid approach to alcohol licensing in the future.



Key Finding 41: Evidence referenced in the reform proposals and submissions to the Panel indicates broad agreement that the Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974 is no longer well aligned with modern business models. Multiple licence categories, limited policy guidance, and reliance on legal interpretation contribute to a system that can be difficult for applicants to navigate and resource-intensive to administer.

The policing of roads, parks and beaches

Roads, parks and beaches are heavily used public spaces and are subject to policing to ensure public safety, orderly use and the protection of shared environments. The policing of these spaces is underpinned by a combination of primary legislation and specific orders, largely delivered through parish-level arrangements.

Roads

Responsibility for the policing of roads in Jersey is closely linked to ownership and governance arrangements. The Department for Infrastructure and Environment (I&E) owns and maintains Jersey's main road network. By-roads (chemins vicinaux) are owned and maintained by the parishes, which act as the highway authority for these roads under the [Loi \(1914\) sur la Voirie](#) and the [Highways \(Jersey\) Law 1956](#). In addition, some roads are privately owned by organisations such as Ports of Jersey, Jersey Property Holdings and housing associations⁴⁷.

The [Minister for Infrastructure acknowledged](#) that responsibility for roads is split between government-owned main roads and parish-owned by-roads, noting that parish roads make up the majority of the Island's road network by length. He confirmed that elements of the road traffic legislative framework are outdated and currently under review, describing some provisions as dating back over a century.

Within parishes, Roads Committees (Comités des Chemins), chaired by the Connétable, exercise regulatory functions in relation to parish roads, including licensing structures, recommending maintenance works and administering restrictions. Under the [Road Traffic \(Jersey\) Law 1956](#), parish roads may not be closed or restricted without approval from the Connétable, who also exercises authority to grant temporary exclusive use of public land through choses publiques permits⁴⁸.

These arrangements mean that enforcement responsibilities differ depending on whether a road is government-owned, parish-owned or privately owned. The Minister recognised variation between parishes in how roads are inspected and maintained, reflecting differing models of resourcing and reliance on volunteers. He also acknowledged that the roads inspectors and Roads Committee system is "*not as well understood as it could be*" and highlighted the need for greater training, clarity and consistency. He said, "*I hate to use the word "standardisation", but we should be more consistent across Parishes. ...What I try to do in St. John is I try to have a succession plan, which*

⁴⁷ [Roads | Comité des Connétables](#)

⁴⁸ [Roads | Comité des Connétables](#)

does not always go down well, but I try to encourage people to retire when it is appropriate and allow younger people to come through so they can learn from those people who have held a position in the past, almost like a mentor-type approach. I think we could do a lot more around that kind of stuff.”

The [Minister for Infrastructure](#) drew a distinction between setting road controls and enforcing them, stating that while speed limits can be changed, enforcement remains a challenge. He described both the benefits and limitations of joint working between government and parishes and accepted that current processes for agreeing and implementing road safety measures can be slow.

The Panel also received submissions questioning whether the current structure, under which responsibility for roads is divided between government and twelve parish Roads Committees, provides the most effective framework for managing and policing the Island’s road network⁴⁹. One [submission highlighted](#) that, while parish Roads Committees operate under a common statutory framework, the existence of multiple road authorities can create challenges for coordination, particularly during major infrastructure projects.

Concerns were raised about communication and engagement between the Infrastructure Department and parishes prior to the implementation of significant road works, with examples cited where affected businesses and residents were unclear which body was responsible for decisions and enforcement. The submission noted that the [Roads Works and Events \(Jersey\) Law 2016](#) was intended to address such issues by improving coordination and communication, but questioned whether it has achieved this in practice.

This perspective was reinforced by the [Chair of the Comité des Connétables](#) who identified road administration and infrastructure as an area where greater efficiency and clarity could be achieved. He noted that the historic division of responsibility between parish roads and government roads can be confusing for the public and challenging in practice, particularly where utility works are concerned: *“Quite frankly, I think for the general public it is quite confusing... we have the situation where roads are dug up for all sorts of things and... the integrity of the roads is very often wrecked when that takes place.”*

He acknowledged that improvements had been made through traffic works coordination systems but suggested that ongoing management and cooperation remained important, particularly where parish and government responsibilities overlap.

The Panel also heard that parish-approved changes to speed limits may take several years to implement, leading to confusion among residents about accountability and enforcement. The [Minister for Infrastructure](#) acknowledged that speed-limit reviews have been subject to lengthy timescales, observing that the current review process has been underway since 2017 and describing this as taking *“far too long”*. He also drew a clear distinction between setting road controls and enforcing them, noting that changes to speed limits are not accompanied by direct enforcement by his department.

This evidence reinforces the Panel’s finding that the policing of roads is influenced not only by who enforces restrictions, but by how clearly roles, responsibilities and timescales are communicated between government, parishes and the public.

⁴⁹ [Peter Hargreaves Submission - 19th June 2025](#)



Key Finding 42: While Roads Committees operate under a shared statutory framework, evidence indicates variation between parishes in inspection practices, resourcing, reliance on volunteers and administrative capacity. The Minister for Infrastructure acknowledged that the Roads Committee system is not well understood and that greater consistency, training and succession planning would be beneficial.



Key Finding 43: Agreed changes to road controls, particularly speed-limit changes approved at parish level, can take several years to implement. These delays contribute to public confusion about responsibility, enforcement and accountability, and reflect weaknesses in coordination and end-to-end implementation processes between government and parishes.

P30 permits

As set out on the [Government of Jersey website](#), a P30 permit allows certain vehicles, typically oversized or restricted vehicles, to use parish by-roads where access would otherwise be restricted. While DVS issues exemption licences confirming vehicle compliance, permission to use parish roads is granted by the parish.

Parish responses to the Panel indicate a consistent approach to the administration of P30 permits, with responsibility for issuing permissions retained at parish level. Most parishes require applicants to hold a DVS-issued exemption licence confirming vehicle compliance before considering an application. However, the decision to grant permission to use parish roads remains with the parish and is typically authorised by the Connétable.

St Martin described a process whereby “*a written request is submitted to the Parish subject to DVS confirming that the vehicles are in order*”, following which “*the Parish issues a P30 permit which is signed off by the Connétable*”. Similarly, St Mary reported that permits are issued annually by the Parish, with details recorded on a local spreadsheet, while St Saviour noted that permit holders must carry a parish-issued permit letter when using parish roads.

Several parishes also linked P30 permits directly to local enforcement powers. St Ouen confirmed that where misuse is identified, “*the permit can be revoked*”, and St Martin reported active monitoring by parish officers and the Honorary Police.

No parish suggested that responsibility for issuing P30 permits should be transferred to DVS or centralised at an island-wide level. The evidence instead reflects a shared understanding that, while DVS plays a regulatory role, decisions about access to parish-owned roads are exercised at parish level.

Parks and open spaces

The policing of parks is governed by the [Policing of Parks \(Jersey\) Regulations 2005](#), which provides specific powers to regulate behaviour within designated public parks. The Regulations consolidate earlier legislation and define how parks are governed, how behaviour is regulated, and who has authority to enforce the rules.

Responsibility for parks under the Regulations is divided between Ministers and the parishes, depending on ownership and administration. For most parks owned or administered by the government, the Minister for Infrastructure acts as the park authority. However, the Regulations specifically assign responsibility for certain named parks to a different Minister. For example, Glacis

Field, Fort Regent and Springfield Sports Ground fall under the responsibility of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning. Where a park is owned or administered by a parish, the Connétable of the parish is the park authority for the purposes of the Regulations.

Park authorities are responsible for the overall management and regulation of their parks. This includes controlling activities within parks, granting or withholding written permission for specified activities and events, and setting conditions where permission is given. In parish parks, these powers sit with the Connétable acting on behalf of the parish.

Enforcement is carried out by authorised persons, defined as individuals appointed by a park authority and all police officers. This includes both States of Jersey Police officers and members of the honorary police, allowing enforcement to operate at both Island and parish level.

Beaches

Beaches are subject to a dedicated statutory regime under the [Policing of Beaches \(Jersey\) Regulations 1959](#). The Policing of Beaches (Jersey) Regulations 1959 establish the legal framework for regulating behaviour and activities on Jersey's public beaches and slipways. The Regulations are intended to protect public safety, maintain order, preserve public enjoyment, and prevent nuisance or damage in coastal areas. They apply to all sea beaches, which are expressly defined to include slipways.

The Regulations are administered by the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, who holds overall responsibility as the relevant Minister. The Minister has the authority to appoint authorised persons for the purposes of enforcement. In addition, all police officers are empowered to enforce the Regulations, meaning enforcement may be carried out by States of Jersey Police and the honorary police.

Unlike the Policing of Parks (Jersey) Regulations 2005, the Policing of Beaches (Jersey) Regulations 1959 do not allocate responsibilities by reference to parish ownership or administration. The Regulations make no reference to parishes or Connétales, and do not assign them any formal role in the governance, management or regulation of beaches.

Enforcement powers are exercised by authorised persons, defined as individuals appointed by the Minister, together with all police officers. Enforcement therefore sits with the States of Jersey Police and the honorary police. The involvement of the honorary police arises from their status as police officers for enforcement purposes under the legislation, rather than from any parish-based authority or administrative responsibility for beaches.

Opportunities for change: roads, parks and beaches

- **Speed limit changes:** The Panel heard concerns about the length of time required to implement agreed speed-limit changes, with examples of parish-approved changes taking years to come into effect. The Minister for Infrastructure accepted that current processes are slow and that reviews take too long. This suggests an opportunity to review end-to-end decision-making and implementation processes, particularly where parish approval has already been given.
- **Roads Committee:** The Minister for Infrastructure acknowledged that inspection, maintenance and resourcing arrangements vary between parishes. This suggests an opportunity to improve consistency of practice across parishes through guidance, shared training and peer support. This could include more structured induction for Roads Committee

members and inspectors, clearer expectations around inspections, and greater use of mentoring or succession planning. Such measures would respect parish autonomy while addressing concerns that the current system is “*not as well understood as it could be*”, as identified by the Minister for Infrastructure. The Minister’s reference to mentoring and succession planning points to a potential Island-wide framework that parishes could adopt voluntarily.

- **Parks and open spaces:** The Panel’s evidence did not identify any shortcomings or operational issues with the current framework for the policing of parks. Submissions and oral evidence did not suggest that the Policing of Parks (Jersey) Regulations 2005 are ineffective, poorly understood, or in need of reform, nor was there evidence that the division of responsibility between Ministers and parishes is causing any specific problems.
- **Beaches:** The evidence considered by the Panel did not indicate that the policing of beaches is ineffective, unclear or operating in a way that gives rise to any problems. While parishes and honorary police are involved in practice, particularly through enforcement, parking control on slipways, and responding to complaints, this involvement arises from practical arrangements and policing powers rather than statutory responsibility. The Panel did not receive evidence that this distinction is problematic or that formalising a parish role would improve outcomes.



Recommendation 24: The Minister for Infrastructure should undertake a review of the end-to-end decision-making and implementation process for speed-limit changes, with a view to reducing delays where parish approval has already been secured. As part of this review, the Minister should identify opportunities to streamline statutory, technical and administrative stages, including clearer timescales, improved coordination between stakeholders, and earlier identification of potential obstacles to implementation.



Recommendation 25: The Minister for Infrastructure should work with parishes to develop non-mandatory, Island-wide guidance for Roads Committees, aimed at improving consistency of inspection, maintenance and resourcing practices while respecting parish autonomy. Any proposed framework or guidance should be developed collaboratively with parishes, recognising local variation while addressing concerns that the current system is not consistently understood or applied.

Parish role in planning applications

Parishes seem to play a structured but limited role in the planning application process, primarily through notification, review and comment, rather than decision-making. Most parishes receive regular notifications of lodged planning applications from the Planning Department, typically via weekly email distributions. St Helier reports that it “*usually receive[s] via email the weekly notice from Planning with the last 7 days of lodged applications*”, while St Mary similarly notes: “*An email is received each Monday from planning providing a list of applications and decisions*”.

In addition to formal notifications, some parishes actively monitor the Planning Register independently. Grouville states that “*The Parish also look at the planning register on gov.je*”, and St Martin adopts a similar approach.

The primary point of parish engagement seems to be where planning applications intersect with parish responsibilities, most notably parish-maintained roads. Many parishes function as statutory consultees in these circumstances through their Roads Committees. St Helier explains that “*The*

Parish Roads Committee is a statutory Consultee, and the Constable is the chairperson", while St Saviour confirms that *"The Parish, through its Roads Committee, reviews any planning application that involves a parish-maintained road"*.

Internal parish processes typically involve an initial officer-level review followed by consideration by the Roads Committee or the Connétable. St Martin notes that *"The Parish Secretary undertakes an initial review and alerts the Roads Committee or Connetable accordingly"*, and St Peter adds that *"The plans are discussed with members of the roads committee, Constable for their comments and if necessary these responses are entered onto the planning portal"*.

Most parishes rely on existing Roads Committee meetings to consider planning applications. St Clement confirms: *"The Roads Committee meet monthly and part of that meeting is to review applications before submitting comments/objections"*. The Panel notes that public consultation led by parishes is less common and generally limited to larger or potentially contentious developments. St Martin reports it would *"support applicants undertaking public consultation at the Public Hall for significant housing development"*, while St Ouen refers to *"a drop-in session organised and hosted by the Parish"* for a recent major application. St Mary states that public discussion at Parish Hall level occurs *"not unless it is a contentious issue and members of the community have requested it"*.

Most parishes confirm that they are able to submit formal objections. St Helier explicitly notes that *"The Connetable himself, not acting as part of the Roads Committee, can also object to an application"*. St Ouen and St Mary reported similar powers. However, some parishes expressed uncertainty about the status and influence of those objections once submitted. St Martin commented that *"It would be helpful to have clarification as to whether Planning consider the Parish to be a 'statutory consultee'"*, while Grouville highlighted governance constraints arising when the Connetable also sits on the Planning Committee, noting: *"Our Connetable is on the planning committee and has to exclude himself from deliberating on any applications within the Parish"*.

The criteria used by parishes when reviewing applications vary but generally seem to focus on roads, safety and amenity impacts. St Saviour described using a wide legislative framework including the Loi (1914) sur la Voirie and the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002. Other parishes adopt less formal approaches. St Mary stated that there are no formal guidelines, relying instead on *"common sense assessment of what is being proposed by the Roads Committee, as far as impact on Parish roads is concerned"*. St Clement and Grouville reported a focus on drainage, road safety and visibility splays.

Parish influence over applications seems to be confined to commenting rather than shaping outcomes. While St Helier noted it can request changes *"at pre-planning stage, and can request this via the Planning Officer"*, most parishes reported that they can only suggest modifications, with final decisions resting with Planning. Grouville summarised its position as *"Only comments"*, and St Mary noted that *"The parish is asked to submit comments which could be in the form of a recommendation"*.

In addition to parish submissions, the Panel received evidence raising broader governance concerns. [One submission](#) questioned whether the current structure enables effective and impartial parish engagement in planning matters, citing examples in St Martin and Grouville where he considered planning breaches to have been inadequately addressed. He argued that the composition and role of Roads Committees may be outdated and suggested considering alternative models of parish engagement, including a more formal community response mechanism.

Opportunities for change

The evidence suggests that the parish role in planning applications is generally understood and functioning within its intended limits, but also highlights potential opportunities for improvement, particularly in terms of clarity, consistency and transparency rather than structural reform.

Several parishes indicated uncertainty about the weight afforded to parish comments and objections, particularly whether they are treated as statutory consultee responses or advisory submissions. Clearer guidance on the formal status of parish input could improve confidence in the process and help manage expectations among parish officials and the public.

Variation between parishes in the criteria and methods used to assess applications reflects local autonomy but may contribute to inconsistencies in approach. While this has not been presented as a specific problem, there may be scope for non-statutory guidance or shared best practice to support Roads Committees, particularly where members rely heavily on experience rather than formal policy frameworks.

Evidence also points to limited avenues for early engagement. While St Helier reported involvement at the pre-planning stage, most parishes described their role as reactive rather than proactive. Opportunities may exist to strengthen early dialogue between Planning and parishes on major or complex developments, without altering decision-making responsibilities.

Overall, the evidence does not indicate a need for fundamental change to the parish role in planning applications. Instead, the Panel believe that opportunities lie in improving understanding of existing processes, clarifying the status of parish input, and supporting consistent engagement practices across parishes while preserving their local advisory function.



Key Finding 44: The evidence indicates that the parish role in planning is broadly understood and operating as intended, but that clearer guidance and improved understanding of existing processes would strengthen confidence, manage expectations and support consistent advisory engagement across parishes.



Recommendation 26: The Minister for the Environment, in collaboration with the Minister for Infrastructure, should develop and publish clear, non-statutory guidance to improve clarity, consistency and transparency in how parishes engage with planning applications. This guidance should:

- clarify the formal status and weight of parish comments and objections, including where parishes are acting as statutory consultees;
- support more consistent approaches by Roads Committees through the sharing of best practice; and
- encourage earlier and proportionate engagement between Planning and parishes on major or complex developments,

without altering existing decision-making responsibilities.



11. Parish Rates and Financial Sustainability

This chapter examines how parish rates operate in practice and considers the long-term sustainability and transparency of the current system. It reviews the historical development of rates, any variation in assessment methodologies, and the potential role of government in supporting fairness and consistency across parishes. It also examines parish financial governance and sustainability.

Parish and Island-wide rates system

The parish rates system is a unique framework for funding local services and infrastructure. It comprises two primary components: Parish Rates and Island-wide Rates.

How parish rates are currently set and applied

Parish rates are set annually by the Parish Assembly. Before determining the rate, the Assembly considers and approves the parish accounts for the previous financial year and the estimates for the forthcoming year. The rate must be set at a level sufficient to generate enough income to meet the parish's approved expenditure for that year, including its general and administrative costs. Once agreed, the parish rate represents a single amount expressed as a rate per quarter, which is applied uniformly to all assessed land within the parish⁵⁰.

The Parish rate is levied on the basis of the rateable value of land, which is determined by the parish Assessment Committee. Although the rate per quarter is the same for all land within a parish, the total amount payable by individual ratepayers varies according to the assessed rateable value of their land. Parish rates are payable by the owners and occupiers of land, and the level of the rate per quarter differs between parishes, reflecting differences in local budgets and expenditure requirements.⁵¹

A '[Guide for Assessors - Overview](#)'⁵² was created after the introduction of the 2005 Law and revised in 2012 following the implementation of a Rates Management System. The guide has recently been updated and was [reissued in 2025](#).

How island-wide rates are currently set and applied

The Island-wide rate is set at a uniform level across Jersey and is fixed by the States Assembly. The rate is calculated to raise a total sum known as the Annual Island-Wide Rates Figure, which is increased each year in line with movements in the Jersey Retail Price Index⁵³. The calculation of the Island-wide rates is undertaken by the Supervisory Committee, which is composed of the Connétables, and the resulting rates apply equally in every parish⁵⁴.

Although composed of the same twelve Connétables, the Supervisory Committee differs fundamentally from the Comité des Connétables. The Supervisory Committee acts in a statutory capacity with legal responsibilities defined in the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005, while the Comité functions as a coordinating body for parish matters.

⁵⁰ Comité des Connétables website – [About Rates](#)

⁵¹ Comité des Connétables website – [About Rates](#)

⁵² See Appendix A in FOI request

⁵³ St Helier Parish – [About Rates](#)

⁵⁴ Parish and island-wide rates – [gov.je](#)

Different Island-wide rates apply depending on the use of the property. Land used wholly or mainly for domestic purposes, meaning as a private dwelling, is charged at a different rate from land used for non-domestic purposes. Although the rate itself is the same across all parishes, the total amount collected within each parish varies according to the number and type of properties assessed in that parish⁵⁵. The Island-wide rate is collected by the parishes alongside the parish rate and is subsequently paid over to the Treasury to support Island-wide public services.

On the annual rates demand issued to ratepayers, the parish rate and the Island-wide rate are shown as separate assessments. These amounts are then combined to determine the total rates payable for each property⁵⁶.



Key Finding 45: Parish rates are set annually to meet locally approved expenditure, resulting in variation between parishes. This variation reflects differences in local priorities and costs rather than differences in legal powers. By contrast, the Island-wide rate is uniform across all parishes and updated annually in line with inflation.

Assessment of rateable values and consistency across parishes

Rateable values for parish rates and the Island-wide rate are determined in accordance with the [Rates \(Jersey\) Law 2005](#) and are based on the “attributes” of land. Attributes include factors such as size, location, accommodation, condition, use, and the quality of any buildings on the land. Land with similar or nearly identical attributes is intended to have the same rateable value, with assessments remaining fixed unless the attributes of the land change or a review or appeal is successful.

Although the law applies uniformly across all twelve parishes, there has been a perception that assessment practices vary in how these attributes are interpreted and applied⁵⁷. To explore this issue, the Panel wrote to all parishes seeking information on their assessment methodologies. Rather than receiving individual parish responses as requested, the Panel received a collective response on behalf of the parishes.

The collective response emphasised that all parishes operate within a single legislative framework and apply a shared island-wide guide to the assessment of parish rates. It also noted that the chairs of Parish Assessment Committees meet to discuss emerging issues and promote consistency in practice. The response stressed that the system is not discretionary, that rateable values are fixed, and that any fundamental change to the basis of assessment would require legislative reform and an island-wide revaluation exercise.

Alongside the collective parish response, the Panel [received a submission](#) from a member of the public with professional experience of parish rate assessments, commenting on the [assessment guide which was published in June 2025](#). While welcoming efforts to promote greater uniformity, the submission highlighted the inherent subjectivity involved in applying an attribute-based assessment system in practice, particularly in relation to the assessment of a property’s “condition”. The submission noted that, although the guide refers to condition, this is “*subject to the assessor’s view*”, with factors such as whether a property is “*unpainted, structurally defective, [or has] grounds overgrown*” cited as examples where professional judgement is required and where different assessors may reasonably reach different conclusions.

⁵⁵ Citizen’s Advice – [Parish rates and appeals procedure](#)

⁵⁶ Citizen’s Advice – [Parish rates and appeals procedure](#)

⁵⁷ [Freedom of Information request](#)

The submission also drew attention to historical variation in assessments of similar properties across parishes, attributing this not to differences in the legal framework, but to differing interpretations of attributes by individual Parish Assessment Committees. In this context, the submission referred to *“the need for a revaluation as there was a different assessment on similar properties due to each Parish Assessment Committee having different interpretations of these properties”*. This suggests that, even where common guidance exists, variation may arise at the point of application rather than from the design of the assessment system itself.

In addition, the submission distinguished between statutory requirements and what is regarded as good practice in assessment and engagement with ratepayers. Practices such as inviting ratepayers to discuss assessments were described as beneficial, with the submission noting that *“good practice is to invite ratepayers to the office to discuss assessments where the ratepayer is unhappy”*. The use of assessment clinics was also referenced. The submission further highlighted that, in the case of commercial properties, *“a typed valuation should be made available to the ratepayers should they query the assessment”*, even though such steps are not explicitly required by legislation.

Finally, the submission raised concerns about perceptions of independence within the review process, observing that the initial review of an assessment is carried out by the same assessment committee responsible for setting it. The submission commented that this means *“the setter of the assessment is basically the first level of appeal, which is not independent often in the view of the appellant”*.

The evidence indicates that the current framework is designed to deliver consistency through shared law, guidance, and oversight, but that its effectiveness ultimately depends on how professional judgement is exercised in practice. This highlights an inherent tension within the system: while flexibility allows assessors to reflect the specific attributes of individual properties, it may also give rise to perceptions of inconsistency, particularly in the absence of clearly defined standards for subjective elements such as condition.

The Panel also received a [submission](#) from a member of the public with professional experience in governance, audit, and compliance, and direct involvement in rates assessments and appeals over several years. The submission provided commentary on the practical operation of the rate assessment, review, and appeal processes following the introduction of the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005.

The submission observed that, despite the intention of the 2005 Law to promote consistency across parishes, pre-2005 assessment practices and methodologies have often been retained unless a property has been altered or an assessment formally challenged. As a result, assessments may reflect historic parish-specific approaches rather than a consistently applied, island-wide interpretation of the statutory attributes.

Concerns were also raised about transparency and comparability in the assessment process. In particular, the submission noted that rateable values are often recorded without a detailed written explanation of how individual attributes were assessed, and that access to comparative attribute data required to support appeals can be difficult for ratepayers to obtain. This may limit the ability of ratepayers to understand or challenge assessments effectively.

In relation to reviews and appeals, the submission highlighted findings by the Rates Appeal Board in individual cases where assessment methodologies were described as non-compliant with the Law. It also drew attention to the limited scope of the appeal process, which is focused on individual assessments and does not extend to consideration of systemic issues or assessor conduct. While

formal appeal mechanisms exist, such structural features may affect perceptions of fairness, independence, and accountability.

While the Panel makes no determination on individual cases, this submission highlights that differences in interpretation, documentation, and practice may persist across parishes, notwithstanding shared legislation and guidance. This reinforces the importance of clear standards, transparency, and effective oversight to support confidence in the parish rates system.



Key Finding 46: Parishes operate under a shared legislative framework and a common assessment guide, with mechanisms in place to promote consistency, including meetings of Assessment Committee chairs. However, some submissions to the Panel indicate that variation may arise in practice due to differences in professional judgement, particularly in relation to subjective attributes such as property condition.



Key Finding 47: While formal safeguards exist, including rights of review and appeal, some submissions to the Panel suggest that ratepayers may not always receive clear explanations of how assessments are reached. Limited access to comparative assessment information can make it difficult for ratepayers to understand or challenge decisions.

Public understanding of the rates system

The Panel published a survey on the parish rates system which ran from September to October 2025. The survey aimed to assess the Islanders' understanding of the parish rates system and to gather any views on the system overall. The survey received 489 responses.

The survey data demonstrates that Islanders' understanding of the parish rates system is limited, with confusion about terminology, responsibilities, and the purpose of both parish and island-wide rates. Although 54.8% of respondents say they are *somewhat familiar* with the system, only 27.6% consider themselves *very familiar*, and almost 18% admit they have heard of the system but "*don't understand it.*"

Many of the respondents do not understand the key terms used within the system. For example, while 80.6% have heard the word *foncier*, nearly 20% have not. Similarly, 43.5% do not know what a "quarter" means in the rates context. One respondent said: "*Few understand the term 'quarters', so perhaps that needs to be changed; simplified.*"

There is also confusion about who sets different parts of the rates. For the island-wide rate, 42% of respondents selected "*I don't know*", while only 19.4% correctly identified the Supervisory Committee. For parish rates, just 52.3% knew that the Parish Assembly sets the rate; 29.4% incorrectly believed it was set by the Connétable alone. This lack of clarity is reflected in comments such as: "*There's no clarity about what the island-wide rate is for; it's just an extra bit of tax revenue the government gets.*" and "*I don't understand who decides what I pay.*"

Understanding of what rates pay for is similarly inconsistent. Although 96% correctly identified parish services such as refuse collection and honorary police as being funded by parish rates, 18.1% incorrectly thought island-wide rates pay for parish services, and 39.4% believed island-wide rates fund healthcare or policing. This aligns with respondents stating: "*I have no idea what my rates go towards,*" and "*I would like the entire rates system, purpose, and what has come from the money to be better advertised.*"

Fairness concerns were also a prominent theme. When asked whether the system is fair, 31.4% said yes, while 37.8% said it is unfair (23.8%) or very unfair (13.9%). Whilst 22.4% selected *“I don’t know”*. The comments received from respondents illustrate why: many respondents highlighted stark differences between parishes, with identical properties attracting very different assessments. One wrote: *“Identical 2-bedroom houses could be assessed as over 30% higher in one parish than another.”* Another noted: *“I live in a row of 5 houses... all 5 houses pay different amounts. Our house is the highest by far.”*

These inconsistencies may highlight a need for a more standardised system. Some respondents explicitly questioned whether Jersey needs 12 separate assessing bodies operating independently. One captured this sentiment: *“It’s crazy that we have systems like this on an island of only 104,000 people.”* Others argue the opposite, emphasising parish identity and local control: *“Please do not hand the rates system to central government — it will be a disaster.”*

The appeals process was another area of concern. Although 80.5% know an appeals process exists, only 22% feel *very confident* about how to start it. About 47% describe themselves as *not very* or *not at all* confident. This is reflected in comments describing the process as intimidating or ineffective. One respondent shared: *“The appeals process is a waste of time.”* Another described: *“One woman was hysterical in tears because she was not allowed to take in a friend who could advise her.”* Others raised worries about independence: *“The appeal should be heard by an independent panel.”*

Finally, payment arrangements contribute to perceptions of unfairness. 39.6% say they do not receive good value for money, and 21.2% are unsure. One respondent reported financial strain related to single lump-sum payments and surcharges. For example: *“A 10% surcharge punishes the less well-off,”* and *“We’re expected to find nearly £1,000 before Christmas.”* These comments illustrate that the method of collection can compound concerns about fairness and transparency.

The Panel found an emerging pattern across all findings. While many Islanders value the parish system itself, they believe the current rates system has not kept pace with expectations of consistency, clarity, and accountability. As one respondent summarised: *“It’s a collection of 12 legacy systems with no economy of scale... it needs an overhaul for the 21st century.”*



Key Finding 48: Results from the Panel’s survey shows that while most Islanders are aware of the rates system, detailed understanding is low. There is widespread confusion about terminology, who sets different rates, and what services are funded by parish and Island-wide rates.



Recommendation 27: Parishes should provide clearer, more consistent explanations to ratepayers on how rateable values are determined. This could include plain-English guidance on the use of attributes, clearer reasons for assessment decisions, and improved signposting to review and appeal processes.

Current position

The parishes’ collective response suggests that, while individual assessors may use different tools or reference points when applying the law, the underlying methodology is intended to be consistent and uniform across the Island. The system incorporates safeguards such as annual returns, rights of review and appeal, and collective oversight through assessor meetings.

However, perceptions of inconsistency remain, particularly where the interpretation of “attributes” may vary in practice. This highlights the importance of transparency, clear guidance, and ongoing

efforts to ensure that similarly situated properties are treated equitably, both within and between parishes.

Evidence provided by the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources to the Panel further illustrates the balance between consistency, local discretion, and public perception within the parish rates system.

Both Ministers acknowledged that variation between parishes is an inherent feature of the current framework, reflecting differing local priorities, expenditure, and decision-making. The Minister for Treasury and Resources noted that, while this may result in different outcomes for properties with similar characteristics across parishes, such variation is an inevitable consequence of parish autonomy rather than inconsistency in law, stating that *“you either have to centralise everything... or you have to accept that there are differences depending on which parish you live in.”*

In relation to assessments, the Chief Minister recognised that professional judgement plays a role in how property attributes are applied in practice, observing that *“how they rate the attributes of the property may vary slightly.”* This supports the view that, while common principles and guidance exist, the application of those principles may differ between assessment committees.

The hearing also highlighted the clear separation between parish rates and the Island-wide rate. Ministers emphasised that parish rates are set locally to meet parish-level expenditure, while the Island-wide rate is a centrally determined revenue stream contributing to general government funding. However, evidence to the Panel suggested limited ministerial involvement in the detailed operation of the Island-wide rate, which may contribute to public uncertainty about accountability and oversight.



Recommendation 28: The government should lead a comprehensive review of the legislative framework governing parish rates, working with the Comité des Connétables, to ensure it meets contemporary standards of transparency, comparability, and public accountability. Where deficiencies are identified, the government should commit to bringing forward legislative changes to modernise the framework.

Parish financial governance and sustainability

When the Panel held a workshop with the procureurs to explore parish financial governance, the procureurs described their role as akin to that of trustees, with a primary duty to safeguard parish assets and funds on behalf of parishioners. They emphasised that parish expenditure must be approved through Parish Assemblies and that parish funds are not government funds.

Procureurs explained that parish accounts are subject to external audit, typically undertaken by a small number of audit firms with experience of parish finances, and expressed confidence in existing audit arrangements.

Concerns about the lack of standardisation in parish accounting were raised in public submissions to the review. One [submission questioned](#) the extent to which parish accounts can be meaningfully compared where each parish appears to select its own accounting policies. She stated that: *“It amazed me that the accounting policies used to draw up the financial accounts are those either ‘adopted’ or ‘selected’ by the Parish... It states clearly in the accounts of those Parishes I have seen that the accounts cannot be compared with any other entity because the accounting basis is likely to be different. Surely, the Supervisory Committee should be agreeing the Accounting Policies for*

all Parishes which at least would make them comparable. That would start to bring the Parishes into the 21st century.”

Similar concerns were raised in [another submission](#), which linked inconsistent accounting practices to wider issues of public confidence and democratic oversight. The submission noted that parish accounts are prepared using accounting principles individually chosen by each parish, creating what she described as *“a patchwork of incompatible financial reporting standards across Jersey’s 12 parishes.”* This was contrasted with government accounting requirements and it was observed that: *“Parishes continue to operate with individually selected accounting policies that would not meet basic professional standards required of private companies or government departments.”*

The submission pointed to St Helier as an example of a parish that has adopted more formal accounting standards, arguing that this demonstrates such an approach is achievable in practice. However, it was also acknowledged that the proposal for greater standardisation had been described by some procureurs as *“overkill,”* it was maintained that the underlying concern was the absence of a consistent, unified system.

Further evidence on parish accounting practices was included in [another submission](#). It was noted that, while parish accounts are audited, the scope of audit is limited to assessing compliance with the parish’s own accounting policies rather than against a common accounting framework. The submission explained: *“The Auditors’ opinion is restricted to the Constable’s accounting policy, and not on the format or use of funds.”*

The submission also raised concerns about the sequencing of financial governance, observing that parish budgets and rates are often approved after the financial year has begun, resulting in expenditure being incurred before formal approval by a Parish Assembly. It further highlighted a potential governance tension in circumstances where the Connétable both determines accounting policies and presides over the Assembly that approves the accounts.

In response to concerns raised in submissions about the timing of parish rate-setting, [the Comité des Connétables highlighted](#) the statutory framework set out in the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005. The Comité explained that the process is designed to ensure that Parish Assemblies consider audited accounts for the previous financial year before approving estimates and setting the rate for the current year.

The Comité noted that moving rate-setting Assemblies to a point before the start of the financial year would require estimates to be approved without the benefit of audited financial information, potentially reducing transparency and increasing uncertainty for parishioners. It further pointed to the distinction in law between the “financial year” and the “rateable year” as a factor that would need to be addressed if any change were contemplated.

The Panel recognises that the current sequencing reflects legislative design and long-standing practice, while noting that perceptions of governance risk remain where expenditure occurs prior to formal approval.

During its [hearing with the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources](#), the Panel explored issues relating financial sustainability and accounting practices. Both Ministers expressed confidence in the overall financial management of the parishes, with the Chief Minister stating that parishes are *“well financially managed”* and that there is *“no evidence to suggest the current system is not sustainable”*.

In relation to parish accounting practices, the Chief Minister acknowledged that the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Practice represents good practice, stating that *“using G.A.A.P. is a good practice and that should be encouraged,”* while recognising that this remains a matter for the parishes themselves and that St Helier’s scale makes it something of an outlier. The Minister for Treasury and Resources similarly emphasised the importance of audited accounts, noting that she had *“never seen a set of accounts where the auditor has raised any concerns”* and describing parish accounts as detailed and transparent in their current form.

However, the hearing also highlighted the absence of a clear framework for setting or overseeing accounting standards across parishes. Treasury officers confirmed that parishes determine their own accounting policies and that Treasury does not currently provide guidance or oversight in this area.

During the workshop, procureurs expressed reservations about the introduction of mandatory GAAP-style accounting requirements. Concerns focused on proportionality, additional cost, administrative burden, and the potential impact on recruitment to what are voluntary roles. Some procureurs cautioned that overly prescriptive financial requirements could deter individuals from volunteering for these positions.

At the same time, procureurs recognised the value of clearer guidance, improved consistency, and more regular opportunities for communication and knowledge sharing between parishes on financial governance matters and indicated that they would welcome more structured arrangements to support this. Evidence also highlighted the absence of formal, Island-wide forums for regular communication and knowledge sharing between procureurs. The [Comité des Connétables](#), however, informed the Panel that there is good inter-parish co-operation between procureurs where required.

The [Comité des Connétables also expressed](#) concern about proposals for mandatory adoption of formal accounting standards. The Comité argued that parish accounts are already prepared using recognised accounting approaches, including historic cost convention and, in some cases, accruals-based “GAAP-lite” methodologies, and that all parish accounts are subject to professional external audit.

The Comité cautioned that imposing full GAAP-style requirements could add complexity and cost, reduce understandability for parishioners, and deter individuals from volunteering for honorary financial roles. While acknowledging that greater alignment may assist comparability, it argued that any move towards standardisation should be proportionate and sensitive to differences in parish scale and function.

The Comité des Connétables also drew the Panel’s attention to the role of the Visite Royale as part of the wider framework of parish financial oversight. A Visite Royale is held every six years in each parish, at which members of the Royal Court, including the Judicial Greffier and the Viscount, attend the parish hall and examine the parish accounts. The accounts are provided to the Court in advance, and the Connétable is required to answer questions on the figures and demonstrate that the accounts have been properly kept.

The Panel notes this as a longstanding constitutional mechanism that provides periodic external scrutiny of parish finances. However, the infrequency of the Visite Royale and its examination of accounts does not address concerns raised elsewhere in the evidence regarding comparability, consistency or modern expectations of financial transparency across all parishes.

The Panel considers that this evidence highlights a tension between parish autonomy and the public expectation of transparency, comparability and financial clarity. While full adoption of GAAP or equivalent standards may not be proportionate for all parishes, the Panel sees merit in exploring a more unified and consistent approach to parish accounting practices as part of strengthening the long-term financial sustainability and public confidence in the parish system.



Key Finding 49: The absence of a common accounting framework across parishes results in limited comparability between parish accounts. Public submissions highlighted that each parish's ability to select its own accounting policies creates a "patchwork" of reporting practices, making it difficult for parishioners and the wider public to meaningfully compare financial performance or assess value for money across parishes.



Key Finding 50: While parish accounts are audited, auditors assess compliance against each parish's own accounting policies rather than against a shared standard. This limits the extent to which audits can provide assurance on the consistency, structure, or presentation of financial information across the parish system as a whole.



Key Finding 51: Concerns were raised in submissions regarding situations where the Connétable both determines accounting policies and presides over the Assembly that approves the accounts. While no evidence of impropriety was presented, this concentration of roles may give rise to perceived conflicts of interest or weaken public confidence in financial scrutiny arrangements.



Key Finding 52: Evidence from procureurs indicates genuine concern about the proportionality, cost, and administrative burden of mandatory GAAP-style accounting, particularly given the voluntary nature of parish roles. Whilst these concerns are noted, the absence of any common baseline standard represents a missed opportunity to strengthen public confidence and long-term governance resilience.



Key Finding 53: There was recognition among procureurs of the value of clearer guidance and enhanced opportunities for knowledge sharing. The lack of structured, Island-wide forums for procureurs represents a gap in the current governance arrangements.



Recommendation 29: The Comité des Connétables, working with procureurs du Bien Public and relevant professional advisers, should develop a common baseline framework for parish accounts. This may not mandate full GAAP compliance, but should set out a minimum, proportionate set of common principles and presentation standards to improve comparability, transparency and public understanding across parishes.



Recommendation 30: The Comité des Connétables, working with procureurs du Bien Public, should consider establishing more structured, Islandwide opportunities for procureurs to share knowledge, guidance and good practice. This could include regular forums, shared guidance materials or periodic training sessions, with the aim of strengthening consistency, confidence and collective learning.

12. Conclusion

This review has demonstrated that the parish system remains a distinctive and deeply valued part of the Island's constitutional, civic and community life. Parishes continue to deliver many essential services and can act as a direct point of contact for many parishioners. The review has shown that the strengths of the parish system is the local knowledge, historical continuity and community trust, and it is clear that these attributes continue to deliver tangible benefits to residents across the Island.

The Panel is conscious that this report is published at a time of political transition, with elections scheduled for 2026. Several of the issues identified in this review, including legislative considerations, governance arrangements and long-term sustainability, will extend beyond the current Assembly term. The Panel therefore considers it important that the findings and recommendations are viewed not as time-limited interventions, but as part of a longer-term programme of reflection, modernisation and improvement.

Evidence received during the review indicates recognition among a range of contributors that aspects of the current framework would benefit from review or reform. In particular, the work already undertaken by the Jersey Law Commission on Parish Assemblies provides a strong foundation on which future progress could be built during the next Assembly term.

Several of the challenges identified in this report, notably those relating to honorary policing, regulatory consistency and financial sustainability, are not amenable to short-term solutions. The Panel considers that an incremental and collaborative approach to change, particularly following the 2026 elections, will offer the best opportunity to strengthen the parish system while preserving its unique character and ensuring it remains resilient, transparent and effective in a modern context.

In that sense, this report should be regarded as a platform for continued work and consideration rather than an endpoint. The Panel encourages the next Assembly, Ministers and the Comité des Connétables to treat the findings as a basis for constructive engagement, prioritisation and reform, so that the parish system continues to be a trusted, democratic and integral part of Island life for future generations.

13. Appendix 1

Review Panel Membership



Deputy Helen Miles, Chair



Deputy Catherine Curtis, Vice-Chair



Connétable Richard Honeycombe



Deputy Kristina Moore

Terms of Reference

1. To examine and document the current relationship between the civic functions and services provided by the parish and government administration.
2. To consider how the government and parishes work collaboratively to deliver timely and effective community services. This includes but is not limited to:

- a. Refuse and Recycling
 - b. Parks and Gardens
 - c. Play spaces
 - d. Honorary Policing
3. To explore the ways in which government engages and interacts with the parishes in order to deliver on its key strategies and policies (i.e. putting children first, carbon neutral roadmap, community safety, health prevention, reducing bureaucracy).
4. To review the administrative functions currently being delivered by the parishes and to consider whether different mechanisms might be needed to meet modern requirements for satisfactory interaction with relevant government functions. This will include but is not limited to:
 - a. Firearms certificates
 - b. Alcohol licensing
 - c. Administration and policing of roads, parks and beaches
 - d. Role of parish in the planning application process
5. To understand how the current system of rates operates and is being applied. To assess whether there is a role for the government in ensuring that each parish applies a transparent and sustainable model and a common methodology which acts in the best interests of all islanders.

Evidence Considered

Written Submissions

The submissions to the review can be [viewed here](#).

Public Hearings

The transcripts from the Public Hearings can be [viewed here](#).

Research

- [Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework](#), Jersey Law Commission
- [Jersey Law Review | Le Connétable et sa paroisse](#)
- [Loi \(1804\) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales](#)
- [Loi \(1842\) sur les publications dans les Eglises](#)
- [Loi \(1905\) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales](#)
- [The Parish Assembly | Comité des Connétables](#)
- [Official Publications \(Publication of Jersey Gazette\) \(Jersey\) Order 2018](#)
- [Jersey's 12 Parishes | Comité des Connétables](#)
- [Official Publications \(Jersey\) Law 1960](#)

- [Review of the Firearms \(Jersey\) Law 2000, and relevant processes – 6th December 2006](#)
- [Firearms \(Jersey\) Law 2000](#)
- [Connétables \(Jersey\) Law 2008](#)
- [Parish Officers | Comité des Connétables](#)
- [Honorary Police \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#)
- [Common Strategic Policy 2023 to 2026](#)
- [Beautiful St Brelade: Community Engagement Report](#)
- [Island identity report 2021](#)
- [Parish Rate \(Administration\) \(Jersey\) Law 1946](#)
- [The Working Party on Parish Assemblies: Report \(2001\)](#)
- [Rates Assessments methodology \(FOI Response\)](#)
- [Machinery of Government – Relationship between the parishes and the executive \(2004\)](#)
- [Rates \(Jersey\) Law 2005](#)
- [Honorary Police \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#)
- [Honorary Police \(Jersey\) Regulations 2005](#)
- [The Conduct and Effectiveness of Parish Hall Enquiries \(2005\)](#)
- [Policy Centre Jersey – Jersey Parishes](#)
- [Submission - Living on Low Income - Comité des Connétables - 21 March 2016](#)
- [States of Jersey Charitable Funds, Accounts December 2010,](#)
- [States Investment Strategies - R.185/2024](#)
- [States Investment Strategies - R.185/2024](#)
- [Westway Trust: Transfer of Assets to Le Don de Faye Trust](#)
- [Submission - Living on Low Income - Comité des Connétables - 21 March 2016](#)
- [St Clement Don Jeanne Gruchy Trust Financial Account, 2021](#)
- [Re-issue - Clos du Pauvres all parishes, 2020](#)

Review Costs

The costs of this review totalled £1,021.41



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